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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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CHRIST AND SOCIETY

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CHRIST AND SOCIETY

BY

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PREFACE

The lectures contained in this volume were delivered at St. Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate, in the City of London, in the autumn of last year under the auspices of the Halley Stewart Trust. I have to express my gratitude to the trustees for their generous treatment of their lecturer and to the Rector of St. Botolph's for his zeal in procuring an audience to listen to them. Their object will be apparent to anyone who reads the first part of the Introductory Lecture, and I do not conceive that any further explanation is necessary.

April, 1928. C. G.

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CHRIST AND SOCIETY

LECTURE I

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

I

In these lectures I am seeking, not for the first time, to advance the influence of certain ideas, already perhaps familiar to those I am speaking to. They are these—

(1) That the present condition of our society, our industry and our international relations, though it presents encouraging features, yet, on the whole, must inspire in our minds a deep sense of dissatisfaction and alarm, and a demand for so thorough a reformation as to amount to a revolution, though one which the teaching of experience, no less than the teaching of Christ, leads us to believe can only be brought about by gradual and peaceful means.

(2) That the evils which we deplore in our present society are not the inevitable results of any unalterable laws of nature, or any kind of inexorable necessity, but are the fruits of human blindness, wilfulness, avarice and selfishness on the widest scale and in the long course of history;

and that therefore their alteration demands something more than legislative and external changes, necessary as these may be: it demands a fundamental change of the spirit in which we think about and live our common life, and conduct our industry, and maintain our international relations. The cry must be "Repent ye—change your minds," if "the kingdom of heaven" is to come as a welcome gift of God and not as a scathing and destructive judgment.

(3) That we should not look for such change of spirit to arise from any simultaneous conversion of men in masses. If we accept the teaching of past experience, we should expect the general alteration to arise from the influence in society of groups of men, inspired probably by prophetic leaders, who have attained to a true vision both of the source of our evils and of the nature of the true remedies; and who have the courage of faith, which can bind them together to act and to suffer in the cause of human emancipation, till their vision and their faith come to prevail more or less completely in the general mind and will.

I will pause to give two examples of what I mean by this third proposition. The first shall be the movement in the Church of England which is called "Anglo-Catholic"; and what I shall say might be said equally well by a hostile observer of this movement as by one who is an adherent of it. The ideas and principles with which it is identified seemed 100 years ago to

be almost dead in the Church of England. Their revival had its origin in a small group of scholars. When that group was broken up under circumstances which seemed disastrous, the movement lived on and took shape in the heart of the people in town and country parishes. Under persecution and injustice it attained an astonishing extension. It has shown power to assimilate independent movements which its founders viewed with grave suspicion, such as the movement in favour of the free critical study of the books of the Bible and the Christian Socialist movement. In result it has deeply altered the character and tendency of the Anglican Church at home and abroad, although it has in its course exhibited a large share of the follies, weaknesses and excesses which popular movements almost always show. The bitter hostility which, from time to time, both its principles and its follies have aroused against it, has not really hindered its progress. This will suffice as one example of the way in which deep changes in ethical and religious feeling and outlook may be brought about in a whole community, though having their origin in a small group of enlightened, convinced and self-sacrificing men. The second example I will cite from Nietzsche's *Use and Abuse of History* [1] —it is that "the wide-spreading culture of the Renaissance was raised upon the shoulders of a small group of some hundred men." I do not feel sure whether the "group" he refers to are

[1] P. 19.

the Italian "Humanists" of the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. But certainly it is true that the "wide-spreading culture," which in effect transformed the social and intellectual outlook of Europe, had its root in each country in a small group of students, inspired with a passionate devotion to the Greek and Latin classics and to the spirit of intellectual clarity and freedom which they found revealed in that literature. From these examples I revert to the fourth proposition:—

(4) That Jesus Christ is really the Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind, in its social as well as its individual life and in the present world as well as in that which is to come: and that there lies upon those who believe in Him a responsibility which cannot be exaggerated to be true to the principles which He taught, and by all available means to bring them to bear upon the whole life of any society of which they form a part, especially when it professes the Christian name.

Upon these ideas, which I have here barely enumerated, we shall return. As I have said, they are and have been familiar ideas among us since the time when Frederick Maurice and the Christian Socialists gave them fresh life and influence.

But to-day we are by no means satisfied with the progress of our cause or with the fruit of our movement. And in part the cause of this disappointment is to be found in the vagueness of our own ideas, and in a consequent uncertainty as

to our methods and our objective. Thus—to name only one point, though a most important one—we are embarrassed by an uncertainty as to what the principles of Christ, such as admit of being applied to society, really were and are. Our Lord has, in fact, been grossly misrepresented both by individualists and by militant socialists. But we may feel convinced of this without becoming much clearer in our own minds about His positive teaching. A little while ago, under the appeal of the name of Albert Schweitzer—that heroic and versatile artist, scholar and missionary—the idea was strongly impressed upon us that our Lord was really a fanatic, inspired and carried out of Himself by the apocalyptic vision: that He believed Himself to be destined, through the voluntary sacrifice of His life, to be exalted to God and to return immediately as the Christ, the glorified Son of Man, in the clouds of heaven to put an end to this world, to judge the quick and the dead, and to bring into being the world to come: and that accordingly He had no thought for this world, which was immediately to pass away. He never dreamt of establishing an enduring church, or of enunciating the principles of life for a continuing society. He did but inculcate upon His disciples a fanatical renunciation of everything which makes permanent social life possible. For there was no future for the world, or for them in it. All that was to be done was to cut themselves loose from the perishing world

and all its interests, that they might await bare and naked the miracle that was to come from heaven, in face of which the present world would vanish like smoke. Now probably our own knowledge of the Gospels, supported and instructed by wise words of our scholars, has convinced us that this is a very one-sided picture, even a grotesque misrepresentation. Nevertheless, the striking apocalyptic element which there undoubtedly is in our Lord's teaching, coupled with the constant claim for world-renunciation which appears in so startling a form in His dealings with His disciples, and which seems in effect wholly inconsistent with any permanent or organized social life, makes a disquieting impression upon our minds. We cannot be satisfied to treat this claim for renunciation as merely figurative. Thus an impression of the "impossibility" of our Lord's teaching, or its utter "other-worldliness," combines with the assertion of the conservative individualists, which is always in our ears, that "Christ was no social reformer" and "never meddled with politics," so as to produce in us a condition of mental bewilderment.

I desire, then, first of all to clear my own mind and yours from this fog of uncertainty by a review of our Lord's teaching, as it is given us in the Gospel records—critically studied with an open mind, and studied also in the light of its sources and of its immediate consequences—so that we may gain or recover a

feeling of security in the possession of a real image of Jesus the Redeemer of man, and of the whole scope of His teaching in its bearing on the individual and on society (Lect. II).[1] I shall endeavour to follow this up with outline pictures of the historical attempts to embody the idea of the kingdom of God, or the lordship of Christ, on earth—in the apostolic period and in the primitive church (Lect. III), then in the earlier and later Middle Ages (Lect. IV), and of the failure of this effort under the influence of the Renaissance and the Reformation and the Industrial Revolution down to the present time (Lect. V). It will be a record of great attempts and also of conspicuous failures. In a few lectures these representations can be given, of course, only in outline: but there is the less reason for more, in that the work of research in all these periods has been well and thoroughly done, and there are authorities which can be named upon whom we can rely with confidence. Then on the basis of such a historical summary, I propose to come back upon the familiar theses which I have propounded (Lect. VI) in order both to test their validity and consider whether our inquiries have led us towards any conclusions which we can proclaim with courage concerning the application of the principles of Christ to the disturbed situation of to-day.

[1] For the sources see the end of the present lecture, and for the immediate consequences the beginning of Lecture III.

II

But there are two preliminary explanations to be made—first, that when we speak of Christ as the Redeemer of men, we must not altogether limit our thought to the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth, and when we speak of the application of His teaching, we must not only think of the Gospels.

I speak as one who believes that the Catholic Creed about Jesus Christ is justified by the evidence and is true. And this belief in the incarnation of God in Jesus of Nazareth involves the centrality and finality of His teaching. Further, the fact stands sure that He did not come suddenly, but at the conclusion of a long historical process—as the climax to a long and gradual process of divine self-revelation in Israel. "God who in many parts and many manners spake in times past unto our fathers by the prophets" only at the last spoke "by his Son." Converging lines of evidence support the traditional belief that the Bible, Old Testament and New, contains the record of a real self-disclosure of God culminating in the person of Christ, and that the Jewish people were the special organs and vehicles of this "word of God" and were thus "the sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life for all mankind." In the region of religion they were the elect people; as in other departments of life, such as art or science or

statecraft, Greeks and Romans have in our Western world been the elect peoples. This belief or group of beliefs, which is the foundation of the Christian tradition, we may hold without scruple or fear, as being valid for our critical age as for those which have preceded it. And in these lectures I shall feel justified in taking it for granted.[1] Nothing in Troeltsch's great work on "the Social Teachings of the Christian Churches and Groups" is more impressive than his conclusions[2] in which he summarizes the stable, constant and once-for-all "given" element in Christianity which constitutes its strength; and this "given" element he finds both in its metaphysical basis—its doctrine of God and of man in his relation to God, both in his present life and in his prospect of the world beyond—and also in its institutional organization and sacramental cultus. Nothing can exceed the importance of emphasizing this "given" element of doctrine, moral standard and organization, if Christianity is to stand stoutly against disintegrating influences.

But the whole truth is not to be found here. The same divine "wisdom" or "word" which was incarnate in Jesus Christ has always and

[1] I have endeavoured to examine the grounds and permanent meaning of these positions in *The Reconstruction of Belief*, Bk. I, chap. iv.

[2] They are finely represented by Von Hügel in *Essays and Addresses* (1921), pp. 191 ff. Troeltsch's emphasis on the superiority of the "Church-type" of Christianity to the "sect-type" or the "mystical-type" is very remarkable: see *Soziallehren* (1912), pp. 980 ff. This note concerns only his greatest work. For his final mind see *Christian Thought*—a posthumous publication in English.

everywhere been at work in the world. The divine Spirit which spoke in Palestine and in the first century had everywhere been finding some utterance or echo. The same sort of inspiration which we find in Amos or Hosea we cannot but feel also in that older Iranian seer, Zarathustra; only it led in Persian history to no continuous and advancing influence, but was submerged in superstition. Again, the same divine wisdom which we hear in the Bible, we hear also—only in different tones and with a less certain direction—in the poets and philosophers and moralists of Greece, of Rome, or of the Farther East. Something certainly of religious truth the Jews had learned before our Lord's time from Persia and Egypt and Greece. It had become incorporated in their tradition and so passed into Christianity. Then, once more, when Christianity went out into the world, being by origin a religion grown on the Jewish root through and through, yet it proceeded to assimilate a good deal from Hellenism, both in philosophy and in ethics. Christian teachers assimilated the current idea of the *Logos*, as the divine reason immanent in the world, and spoke of philosophy among the Greeks as having been, like the Law to the Jews, their tutor to bring them to Christ. They recognized in the Roman Empire a divine preparation for the spread of the universal Gospel. The conception of the four cardinal virtues, which becomes central in Christian Ethics, came, partly by the channel of the Book of Wisdom,

from Greek and Roman thinkers, and with it the root conception of the Natural Law—really divine—revealed everywhere more or less clearly in human consciences and human society. The extent of this process of "borrowing" by the Christian Church can easily be exaggerated—it has been exaggerated. But it is there. Its justification depends upon the recognition that it is not only in Israel and in Jesus that the divine wisdom or word has spoken. There is a light which lighteneth every man—a natural conscience, social and individual, to which the Christian message is bound to "commend itself,' and which it is bound to prove itself able to assimilate. I am anxious to insist upon this at starting. I am to seek to show what is the social and ethical content of the Christian message. That is a study in past history. We need to make this study as dispassionate as possible and as purely historical. But that is not enough. If we are to apply the religion of Christ, we need also and equally to have our ears open to the moral ideals of each age and country—especially of the present age. For instance, the ideas associated with democracy—the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity—we must believe to be, at their best, of divine origin—real expressions of the divine purpose and the divine wisdom for to-day.

We must lend our ears, then, not only to the wisdom of the Gospels but to the wisdom of the ages and of the present age. We must learn to

preach "the everlasting Gospel" so that the men of our time may catch in it the reflection of their own best thoughts and aspirations. We must interpret the old creed into modern speech. I am quite aware that some who claim to be doing this are not really interpreting the old message, but ignoring it in part and in part plainly misinterpreting it. We must avoid such rash dealing with what rightly claims to be a divine message and word of God. Nevertheless, if we believe that there is such a permanent Gospel which speaks through all changing ages to the unchanging heart of man, yet it must be able to recognize also a fresh "movement of God" in each age. As of old it spoke in terms intelligible to the spirit and philosophy of the Greco-Roman Empire, and again of the Middle Ages, and again of the Renaissance—correcting the current spirit and philosophy but also assimilating it—so also it must be able to assimilate the movement of God in the heart of our own age as well as to correct what it interprets.

III

There is a second preliminary observation which needs to be made. It is not likely that any situation in past history will on close examination prove to be closely like our own. Our own is indeed unprecedented, especially in the impossibility which it presents of dealing with any

section of society or any country in isolation, owing to the vast and rapid changes in means of communication which have made the whole world one organism as it never was before. Thus it is not likely that in passing in rapid survey the various attempts which have been made in the Christian centuries to realize the kingdom of God on earth, we are likely to find anyone which can serve as a model for us. The times are too deeply changed. And a further point must be noticed. If we study the great individuals who most conspicuously have led these earlier attempts, and have in fact by the strength of their influence inaugurated new epochs, such as St. Benedict or St. Francis or John Calvin, we find that they have not apparently appealed to history or been much influenced by past examples. That is, they have looked back simply to the great original example and to nothing else; and either seeing deeply into the needs of their time, or being overwhelmed by the sense of some special vocation, they have become founders and originators of movements which changed more or less deeply and widely the face of Christendom. In the deeply stimulating essay already referred to,[1] Nietzsche calls attention to the great leaders of humanity as being "unhistorical" or "superhistorical" persons; and he makes a penetrating indictment of the study of history, as pursued in the German universities of his time, as calculated to stifle genius, to kill free

[1] *The Use and Abuse of History.*

initiative and to turn men into merely conservative antiquarians or dissatisfied critics, alike without positive vision and without the determination necessary to *do* anything effective. So he seems to say that the men who would do anything effective for their own time must trust to their intuitions and refuse history. Whether or no we can go quite so far as this, we must recognize that the study of history, honestly pursued, has an enslaving and paralysing power—a power to kill idealism. It may easily generate in our minds an acquiescence in low aims and a cynical disbelief in the possibilities of high moral attainment. But this is not the whole truth. History is also what Nietzsche calls "monumental." It presents to us—not only problems, compromises and failures, but also heroes, clear visions and great achievements: and, thus considered, it can nourish, as nothing else can, the sense of the ideal, and the faith in the possibility of doing something for the redemption of man. "For the marching-orders," of which inspired youth is conscious, "are that what has once been able to extend the conception Man, and give it a fairer content, must ever exist for the same office. The great moments in the individual battle form a chain, a high road of humanity through the ages; and the highest points of those vanished moments are yet great and living for men; and this is the fundamental idea of the belief in humanity, that finds a voice in the demand for monumental history." One may add

that, while Jewish history—that contained in the Old Testament—was almost as uncritical as mediæval history, it was profoundly "monumental." It treasured and idealized, but always on the lines of reality, the great acts of God through achieving men, by which the divine purpose had made itself effective, in Abraham, in Moses, in Joshua, in David, in Elijah, in Isaiah, in the Maccabees and a hundred others, whose enthusiasm sufficed to counteract the stubborn materialism and stupid deafness of their people.

There is a further point which should serve to deepen our sense of debt to the great Hebrew prophets. Even if history depresses us with its record of constant and general failure to realize the ideal, it also suggests something that makes effort worth while—the sense of a divine purpose in history which, if it is never perfectly realized, but is often almost baffled by human weakness and sin, is yet visible enough, to those who have eyes to see, to nourish in them that passion for co-operation with God which is, I suppose, the deepest and most enduring motive which can stir us to action and sustain us in it. The greatest moral gain we derive from history is that, truly interpreted, it breeds in us an awful sense of responsibility: for in every generation the will of God is more or less clearly apparent to loyal hearts: and the lesson of history is that, as it can be furthered by human faith and courage, so also it can, for the time at least, be baffled

and defeated by human blindness, wilfulness and cowardice. In each critical moment the few who understand and correspond with the divine purpose may make the whole difference. The victory over evil can be in some degree won. Seemingly overwhelming forces making for decay or destruction can be arrested, and fresh springs of life set flowing. On the other hand, if "the good" lack courage to seize the opportunity, and "slink out of the conflict where the immortal garland is to be won," evil triumphs. As has been said, "It is when the best men cease trying that the world sinks back like lead." I dare to say that if history cannot rightly be said to be "a cordial for drooping spirits," if its study tends to pessimism as easily as to optimism, at least it is a powerful stimulus to the sense of responsibility. It is full of examples of the cause of the kingdom of God being won or lost by the courage or the cowardice of those in each generation who at least see what the purpose of God must be.

IV[1]

We go back, then, to study the moral teaching of Jesus Christ, especially in its bearing on human society. He proclaimed His mission as the "good tidings of the kingdom of God" now "at hand,"

[1] For the section in particular see *Reconstruction of Belief*, Pt. I, chaps. iv and v, and Pt. II, chap. i, § 3.

or, even more, already present. This meant that His message was rooted in the ancient bed of prophetic teaching, and to interpret it aright we must go farther back to the prophets of Israel to whom we owe a moral debt which it is hardly possible to exaggerate. We owe to them our sense of the indissoluble union of religion with morality and with social morality, because they proclaimed constantly and continuously that Jehovah—the God of Israel and, as was finally recognized, the only God, the Creator of all that exists—is a being of moral character, of justice and mercy and truth, and that His purpose in His whole creation is good. These prophets of Israel found themselves surrounded with non-moral religions—religions with a cultus divorced from character—both outside their own people and within it. In strong reaction from the surrounding ideas they denounced in words which live for ever this non-moral or immoral cultus as worthless and profane. "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me: your new moons, your sabbath days and calling of assemblies are an offence unto me; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." It would seem as if they were rejecting the ceremonial cultus altogether. But when after a long and seemingly unsuccessful struggle within their own people they won the victory for their root idea, it was not in this sense that their meaning was interpreted. A cultus is necessary for any common religion. So, however ambiguous its origin, it was

ethically transformed, not abandoned or abolished. But the later prophets who affirm the cultus, and accept the ceremonial law in its traditional development, are permeated with the same ethical spirit as their precursors—"What doth the Lord require of thee but to love mercy, and to do justly, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Well, then, from this point of view, upon what sort of world did the prophets have their outlook? It was upon a world trampled by brutal and bloody conquerors, a cruel and merciless world. And in the two separate kingdoms of Israel and Judah they saw an even more revolting spectacle —more revolting because it was a spectacle of sin against the light. They saw selfish luxury in high places and contempt of the poor, and triumphant greed and lust and cruelty, and fraudulent commerce, "grinding the faces of the poor." They could at the time accomplish no permanent or effective reform within, nor offer effective resistance to tyrants from without. But they knew, with an unconquerable inner assurance, that, as surely as God is God, wickedness must be overthrown, God must come into His own, the kingdom of God must come. Their hopes deceived them as to the how and the when, time after time. Their particular anticipations were not realized. Still there remained the confident assurance of a good time coming. This is the gospel of the kingdom of God. In the later apocalypses—influenced by a spirit of despair of this world, and also by a breath of dualism from

the farther East—this "good time," this kingdom of God to come, tends to find its realization in some other world, some distant heaven, quite outside the world of present experience which is to pass away. But in the canonical books of the Old Testament it is always in this world, purged through whatever fiery judgment—always in this world, with Jerusalem as its centre, that the kingdom is to be found; and very briefly we must note the features of the various prophesies, inasmuch as their recognition is necessary for the understanding of the message of the kingdom, as it was spoken afresh by John the Baptist and by Jesus.

(1) The kingdom of God is anticipated as the reign of God in a purified Israel, an Israel now fit to become the centre of a world religion—"all nations shall flow unto" the exalted Jerusalem. "Ten men out of all the languages of the nations shall even take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." We must note that the scriptural idea of "the kingdom of God" or "of heaven" is never *merely* that of "the reign" or "sovereignty of God," as some moderns have led us to suppose: it is always that of the reign or sovereignty of God as embodied in Israel. It is not an abstract idea but an embodied ideal.

(2) The kingdom is sometimes seen by the prophets to centre in a king of the House of David who is to be the agent and representative

of the justice of God, and who is to be specially the friend and protector of the poor; and this monarchial idea in later times prevailed. The expectation of the kingdom of God which forms the background of the Gospel story was in this sense thoroughly Messianic.

(3) Upon this Christ—this anointed king—is to be expected a new and rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God, and this outpouring is to be not upon him only but upon his whole people, upon "all flesh."

(4) This outpouring of the Spirit will be accompanied by a new covenant of God with Israel more penetrating and more spiritual than the covenant made through Moses.

(5) Occasionally it appears in the prophetic vision that the kingdom is not to be established by successful war, or by the high hand of physical power, but by the weapons of meekness and suffering even till death. It is the meek sufferer who is to prove at last the acceptable sacrifice effective to win the victory from God. This is the ideal of the "Suffering Servant" in Isaiah liii, so familiar to us because Our Lord so emphatically identified Himself with it. But it was an idea which had remained among the Jews quite unrecognized and unassimilated.

(6) The establishment of the kingdom of God must involve the final overthrow of all godless tyrannies, the unquestionable victory over all arrogant and cruel institutions and societies. Thus the Day of God is to be a day of judgment.

(7) Finally in the Book of Daniel, almost the latest book of the Old Testament Canon, the victory of the Saints, that is, of the people of Israel who are true to the Law of God, is prefigured in vision as the coming in the clouds of heaven of one like to a son of man, who takes the place of the violent beasts representing the world-empires: and in the circles where the *Similitudes* of the Book of Enoch were known this manlike form from heaven was identified with the Christ or, we should rather say, substituted for the human-born Christ, the son of David. This, in brief summary, is the cycle of ideas which make up the vision of the kingdom of God in the Old Testament.

We must proceed to see what development our Lord gave to this great and continuous forecast of the kingdom of God to come. Meanwhile let us recognise that, through our Lord, Christendom and the world owes to the Jewish prophets not only belief in the one God, the Creator of all that is, whom there is no other way to please than by a goodness of character like His own and a like goodwill to man, but also the conviction of the good time coming as the climax of this world's history—the assurance that God cannot finally fail, but must come into His own in His whole creation; and that it is the function of man—the very end of his being—to co-operate with God in the fulfilment of His purpose. The nations of the earth have mostly found their golden age in the past—a dream

of the past—and have been quite without the sense of a continuous divine purpose working all through history and finally to be realized. The famous vision of a golden age just coming which we find in Virgil was apparently due to Jewish influence. There is perhaps no real rival to the prophets of Israel in this respect except Zarathustra, in whom we find the same prophetic conviction, though precariously based upon a foundation of traditional dualism. On the whole it is to the prophets of Israel that we must look not only for the root conviction which associates inseparably God with goodness, but also for the assurance that good is to triumph actually in a realized kingdom of God, that there runs through history this one continuous purpose, and that in it we men are called to be "fellow-workers with God."

LECTURE II

THE TEACHING OF JESUS

We have seen that the prophets of Israel, upon whose teaching Jesus Christ took His stand, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, had foreseen that, as surely as God is God, so surely His lordship must at last be realized on earth in His people Israel, in justice and peace, and abundance of prosperity, and must diffuse its power and influence in all the world. The prophets seem often to anticipate the coming of this kingdom of God in the immediate future, following on some decisive collapse of this or that oppressive tyranny to which at the moment their people were subjected. Disappointment, however, followed on disappointment, but without ever extinguishing the confident hope. Some fifty years before our Lord's birth, when Palestine was finally passing under the Roman supremacy, the Psalms of Solomon show this Messianic hope (though not in its highest or most spiritual form) still alive and active. It kindled the fires of an intense nationalism in the hearts of the Jewish people in our Lord's day and down to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The extreme nationalists, or Zealots, entertained a wild hope that by the miraculous power of God the Jews under the leadership of the God-empowered

Christ, the King of David's line, would be enabled to overthrow even the power of Rome and place Israel at the head of the nations. The Messianic hope was deep also in the heart of the Pharisees, the religious leaders of Israel, but in the form of a belief that, without any such mad military movement as the Zealots contemplated, if they scrupulously kept the Law of Moses according to the tradition of the scribes, God would bare His own arm to vindicate His people. The hope of a good time coming in one form or another was so much alive among the Jews throughout the world, and the Jews counted for so much in many parts of the Empire, that their Messianic expectation awoke an echo far beyond the limits of Judaism, and seems to receive expression in Virgil's famous vision of a golden age dawning in the peaceful rule of Augustus.

But when John the Baptist came—the true precursor of Jesus—he struck a new note, or rather re-struck the note of prophetic inspiration at its highest. It was true that the kingdom of God was at hand. But Israel was morally quite unfit to welcome or to respond to this coming of the Lord. What was needed was a deep moral reformation such as could provide "a people prepared for the Lord." The baptism which John administered was the symbol of a cleansing and a new birth, such as might generate a new Israel whom the Christ should find ready for Him. Then in Jesus of Nazareth he discerned "Him

who was to come," and Jesus began His mission by taking up John's message. "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe in the gospel."[1] Our business to-day is especially to study the moral quality of the kingdom as Jesus preached it. But first of all we must seek to clear up our minds as to what Jesus meant by the kingdom and its coming.

I

First, then, as we study the teaching of Jesus, it appears that not only was the kingdom at hand, but that in some sense it had actually come in His person. There was, at first, no proclamation of Himself as the Christ: but only the proclamation of the kingdom, and the ingathering of those who received His teaching and believed in Him to constitute the New Israel. "Fear not, little flock," He said to them, "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He told them that the prophets and the law belonged only to the preparation for the kingdom, not to the kingdom itself: even John the Baptist, though no greater than he had been born of woman, stood outside it, while the least of His disciples, because he stood within it, was greater than John. His disciples saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears what the

[1] Mark i. 15.

great ones of old had desired to see and hear but had not been satisfied. The kingdom of heaven, He told the Pharisees, was already within their borders.[1] It was already planted as a seed to grow into a great tree, and spread as a net to gather all kinds of fish. And we see Jesus training and testing and in a measure organizing His new Israel. In all this He was acting exactly on the lines of the old prophets. When they saw that Israel in bulk would not listen to them, they turned to the little company of those who had ears to hear, the faithful "remnant," and proclaimed them the true Israel. Our Lord in the Gospel is plainly following the same method. In the Twelve, whom He constituted apostles, He discerns the moral quality of rock-like consistency upon which He can build His new fabric. To their training more and more He devotes all His attention. They are being trained not only as witnesses, but as rulers of the New Israel—stewards of His household who shall give its members their portion of meat in due season, with an appointed porter to watch the door of the house: for inasmuch as the present guardians of Israel, the divinely planted vineyard, have been false to their charge, it must be handed over to new management. The

[1] Luke xvii. 21. The words translated "within you" can mean "in the midst of you" or "within your borders": and if this *can* be the meaning of the words, the context seems to me to indicate that it is so. No doubt Jesus might have told the disciples that the kingdom of God was within them, but He could hardly have said so to the quite unconverted Pharisees.

passages in the First and Fourth Gospels in which legislative and disciplinary authority, to be exercised with divine sanction, is promised to Peter, the leader of the apostolic company, and conferred upon the Twelve as a whole, are quite in accord with the intimations given in St. Mark and St. Luke, and are needed to account for the position of unquestioned authority which is assigned to the apostles in the Acts and in the Epistles. Finally the apostles are assured that at the consummation of the kingdom they shall be found round their Lord sitting on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It appears, then, clearly that Jesus intended to organize those who believed in Him as the promised Christ in a community representing the new and true Israel under the Twelve as their rulers. It is equally evident that, though Jesus is very chary in legislating for the new community, yet He did provide them with certain sacramental rites—baptism which He took over from John as a ceremony of initiation, and "the breaking of bread" as a recurrent rite of fellowship with Himself and with one another. It seems to me that, in view of the trustworthy evidence supplied by our earliest documents, it is mere wilfulness to deny that Christ did thus found, or rather refound, the Church as the new Israel and did supply it with a rudimentary organization. Only so, moreover, can we account for the fact that, after Christ left the earth, the visible, organized community under the Twelve

as its officers appears from the beginning as the sphere of the new Covenant of Grace, and the home and instrument of the Spirit, and the organ or body of Christ. If, as we shall see, it is not yet in the full sense the kingdom of God realized on earth, it is yet the representative of the kingdom in so full a sense as to be easily identified with it; and its business is so to live its corporate life and proclaim its corporate message as that the outside world shall be forced, in spite of all its prejudices, to recognize in it the presence of God and the reality of fellowship, human and divine.[1]

II

Here we come to the second point on which it is necessary that our minds should be cleared up. You will observe that of the seven notes of the kingdom of God found, as we saw,[2] in the prophets of Israel, five are already realized in the Christian Church as it appears in the pages of the Acts and the Epistles. There you have, first, the New Israel, the home and source of the religion which is to become the world religion. Secondly, there you find, recognized in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ who was to come, the true son of David, the exalted King and Lord of all.

[1] In the whole of this section the evidence is collected in *Reconstruction*, Bk. III, chap. ii.

[2] See above, pp. 33–5.

Thirdly, from Him has come forth the new and rich outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the Church. Fourthly, there is to be found the New Covenant of God with man in Christ, better and richer than the Old Covenant through Moses. Lastly, there is the true principle clearly recognized that the method by which the kingdom of God is to be founded and to make its way is not violence but service, and not service only but sacrifice. The Covenant is established in the life-blood of Christ's own sacrifice. All these notes of the kingdom are matters of loud proclamation in the apostolic Gospel. But it is equally evident that there are two unfulfilled notes. All hostile tyrannies have not been overthrown. The princes of this world have had the upper hand and crucified the Christ: and, though God has vindicated His Christ, yet the Church which is His body, His organ and instrument in the world, still suffers rejection and persecution. The attribute of manifest supremacy, which was to be the sixth note of the kingdom, is still absent. So is the seventh and last note, which is in substance identical with the sixth—that triumph of the kingdom which is embodied in the great picture of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven to judge the quick and dead, and to inaugurate the "age to come"—God coming into His own in His whole universe.

If, then, we are to be true to all our evidence, we are bound to recognize that in the method of our Lord the kingdom is to be realized in

stages; and in His teaching we must remark that there is no sign of any change of plan. First, the moral basis of the kingdom is laid in Galilee. Its moral principles are proclaimed and enforced with most penetrating vigour, and Jesus finds in a very few—especially in Peter and the Twelve—something trustworthy upon which He can build. So the new foundation is laid and the Church which is the representative of the kingdom receives its elementary organization. According to the plain evidence of the Gospels that is the first stage. Meanwhile, it has appeared that the Christ is destined for rejection, for seeming failure, for a criminal's death. Jesus took the figure of the Suffering Servant, winning the kingdom by his sacrificial death, as the central feature in His doctrine of the Christ who was to come. Only along the way of the cross was the Son of David to win His crown. Only so was the Son of Man to attain His glory. Only so could the Anointed One become to mankind the source of reconciliation with God and of the Spirit of Power. Thus only on the basis of the Death and the Resurrection and the Pentecostal Spirit can the five notes of the kingdom, of which we have just been speaking, be realized. That is the second stage for which Jesus is seen in the Gospels preparing the reluctant Twelve. He speaks of an immediate coming of the kingdom which men who were alive with Him in the world were to witness. This, it would seem, is the realization of which He is specially thinking.

Peter and Paul alike felt that they were living under conditions of this realization. The kingdom had come and in some sense the Church was it. But there was something still to be expected. Jesus has felt Himself up against a formidable opposition—a hostile power, to which He knew Himself destined—at least in appearance—to succumb. This seeming failure of God was an experience as horrible to Him as to the prophets of old. But, like the prophets of old, He foresaw the ruin of the hostile power, which, alas! was none other than the Old Israel, the chosen people of God, acting from Jerusalem as its centre. Thus certainly Jesus announced the approaching destruction of apostate Jerusalem. Certainly when His disciples questioned Him, He in His apocalyptic discourse emphasized the certain coming of a judgment which should not leave one stone upon another of the glorious temple, and prophesied the coming of this judgment within such a measurable time that "this generation should not pass away till all those things were fulfilled."[1] Of this He spoke with the tone of infallibility: and so in fact it came about forty years after His death. That was another stage in the realization of the kingdom—another such judgment on a power hostile to God as the prophets had foreseen of old hanging over Assyria and Egypt and Babylon and Tyre.

But, just in the manner of the old prophets, our Lord threw the vision of this judgment on

[1] See *Reconstruction*, Bk. II, chap. v.

apostate Jerusalem upon the background of a great final world-catastrophe, world-judgment and world-renewal. That was the way of the prophets. The dooms on the hostile world-powers immediately under their eye are thrown upon this vast cosmic background, and expressed in powerful imaginative pictures of a final Day of the Lord. Jesus uses the language of the old prophets and of the Book of Daniel and adds hardly anything to it. That the features of the cosmic catastrophe—the darkened sun and moon—the falling stars—the rending heaven—the descending form—the angelic messengers—the judgment throne—the assembly of mankind—the opened books—the solemn doom—the restoration of nature—the new Jerusalem—(whether on the lips of the old prophets or in the mouth of Jesus) are figures for the imagination and not literal descriptions of what will occur, we need not and cannot doubt. But in face of so many teachers of our day who set them aside as an idle dream, it is very necessary to emphasize that the whole body of Christian doctrine, in all its stages of delivery—in the prophets, in Christ, in His apostles, in the teaching of the Church universal —is bound up with the conviction that God is finally to come into His own, by His own manifest act, in His whole creation—that the end of history is to be the complete and final victory or vindication of God. This is the ground, or part of the ground, on which all Christian endurance rests. "Be ye therefore steadfast,

unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know that your labour will not be in vain in the Lord." One day by the act of God, and not as the product of human effort, though all its materials have been fashioned in the human workshop, shall the New Jerusalem descend and be established under the new heaven and on the new earth. And nothing which in the cause of God has been truly conceived and faithfully executed shall be found to have been lost, however much it may have seemed to fail. All shall be found built up into the eternal structure. "The works" of the blessed dead follow with them into the unseen world, only to reappear integrated and transfigured in the great whole. This confidence in the Day of the Lord is part of the essential mind of Jesus.[1] He bids us contemplate as possible a failure of the Church as total as His own seeming failure. He bids us contemplate "last days" so seemingly disastrous that He can ask the tremendous question—"When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?" But through all seeming failure the final victory is assured.

But granted all this, are we to assent to the idea that the *immediate* end of the world was part of the message of the Christ, and that this fact renders futile any idea that Christ founded the Church to be the true representative of the kingdom on earth during a quite indefinite

[1] Cf. Troeltsch's *Soziallehren*, p. 979—Essentially for Christianity "Das Jenseits ist die Kraft des Diesseits."

period?[1] That is a question which specially concerns us. Certainly we are not to assent. To do so is deliberately to close our eyes to more than half of the evidence. No doubt the first Church did expect "the end" within their own generation. But at the same time they proceeded to build the Church as for a future. This is the plain witness of the Acts and the Epistles. When, in fact, it appeared that the "end was not yet"—that judgment fell on Jerusalem and yet there was no "end," only a new adversary appearing in the persecuting Empire—the Church seems to have suffered no shock. Again and again in history it has been disappointed in its expectation of the "end." But it has not ceased to build and to enlarge its building, to strive and to suffer, to die and to revive. And when we examine the records of Christ's teaching, I dare to say that though He plainly proclaimed a speedy judgment on Jerusalem, yet the evidence on the whole (though there is some confusion in the Gospels) indicates that He definitely refused to give any message as to the time of the end. So far from that, He certainly spoke of a day and an hour ("that day and that hour") of which

[1] Thus Troeltsch's *Soziallehren*, pp. 93–4, would have us contrast Christ with St. Paul, in the sense that to St. Paul the contrast is between the Church and the World, and to Christ between the present and the future. "Lag für ihn der Schnitt nicht zwischen Welt und Kirche, sondern zwischen Gegenwart und Zukunft." This is surely not true. To St. Paul, as to Christ, the contrast between the present and the future is always obvious: and to Christ, as to St. Paul, the kingdom is present as well as future—that is, He is organizing His Church to represent the kingdom in a hostile world around it for a period which He refuses to define.

men and angels alike could know nothing—which was in the Father's knowledge alone. He explicitly declared that there was no map of the future open even before His own eyes ("neither the Son"). After the resurrection He varies the phrase and says, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has reserved in His own power."

If we are true to the evidence, then, we must acknowledge that in the teaching of Jesus the kingdom was to be realized in stages. There is the fashioning of the materials and the laying of the foundation in the mortal life of Jesus: then at Pentecost there is the empowering of the Church as the representative of the kingdom of God on earth, the organ and instrument of the glorified Christ by His Spirit, for all the period of conflict and progress and failure: then after forty years there follows the judgment on apostate Jerusalem: finally—though Christ refused to give any measure of time—there is to be "the Day of the Lord" revealed from heaven, the act of God by which the period of struggle passes into the moment of victory.

But now we are only concerned with the two first stages. We want to know what is the idea of human life which is embodied in the teaching of Jesus—the idea for which the Church, as the visible organization of the kingdom of God on earth, is meant to stand—and what is its relation to the general political and economic life of man.

III

Jesus Christ, when He brought into the world "the gospel of the kingdom," was at pains, first of all, to establish its ethical character. He would have His disciples apprehend quite clearly what sort of men they must be who would be citizens of that kingdom: for He was organizing a group of persons who were to represent the kingdom in the world: they were to be "the salt of the earth" with a distinctive flavour: "the light of the world" clearly distinguishable in the surrounding darkness: "a city set on a hill" in view of all mankind. Men everywhere were to see in them the true expression of humanity as God would have it, and by that spectacle to be won for the kingdom themselves. There are theological implications in our Lord's teaching with which we are not at present concerned. But its dominant theological principle is that of the Fatherhood of God, by which our Lord would have us understand not only a general providence, but a personal care and love for every individual, showing itself eager and active for the redemption of each, and recognizing no one as outcast or hopeless who will but consent to listen and respond to the divine love. There belongs accordingly to every member of the human family an equal and eternal spiritual value. That is the ruling idea. Differences of function and capacity among men involve sub-

ordination of one to another. Jesus shows no signs of hostility to "inequality" in this sense. But in spiritual value all are equal. There are no privileged persons who have a right to think of themselves as more important in God's sight than their fellows, or to exploit others for their own profit and pleasure. The indignation of Jesus against such an insolent temper is the reflection of the indignation of God. Dignity lies only in service, not in the power to compel the service of others for our own profit. Everything that exalts a man in his own eyes above his fellows, as an exceptional or superior person, is viewed with resentment in Jesus' teaching. Thus He treats wealth or the accumulation of property, and avarice, the acquisitive passion, as an evil, an almost insuperable obstacle to entrance into the kingdom. So also He treats the "learning" which He saw around Him, entitling a select class of men to despise others—though, be it observed, no teacher ever appreciated more than our Lord the average man's capacity for thought and knowledge, or took more pains to cultivate it: He would have "the key of knowledge" put in every man's hand. But everything that ministers to privilege and pride He hates. He pictures the rich man's banqueting hall as the vestibule of the place of torment. He pours out His wrath on arrogant ecclesiastics. Indifference to the needs of the miserable brings upon itself the divine sentence of judgment—"Depart, ye cursed." Always He is plainly on the side of

the humble and the poor.[1] His gracious offer, "Come unto me, and I will give rest," is made only to the workers—those who toil and feel the burden of life.[2] He loves to approve the poor man's acts of kindness and self-sacrifice. Actual surrender of wealth or detachment from wealth, unlimited meekness under injury and readiness to forgive, the passion of pity and such a pity as moves to action, the pity that has power in it—these are the qualities which command His blessing. And His respect for women is always noticeable. He neglects every convention which would stamp women as of less value than men. With Him each man and woman counts for one and no one for more than one, and the worth of each one is infinite. These features in our Lord's teaching lie on the surface. But there are some underlying principles which require attention.

(1) In every settled society a certain standard of respectability or of "good form" comes into being. It may be higher or lower; and in the religious world of Palestine, where the Pharisees were the leaders, it was in many respects a very exacting standard. But all such social standards of good behaviour tend always to stress outward conformity rather than inward motive, and also to appraise highly all that maintains the settled order, and to brand with infamy what tends to upset it—such as outrages on life and property

[1] For the above, see Luke xvii. 2; Matt. xviii. 14; Luke xxii. 24 ff., xiv. 7 ff, xviii. 9 ff., xvi 13, xi. 52, xvi. 19 ff.; Matt. xxv. 31 ff., etc.

[2] There is no justification for interpreting "All ye that labour and are heavy laden" in any other more recondite sense.

and lawless lust. These are disreputable sins and must be stamped out. Those who practise them are the enemies of society. But any such distinction between disreputable and respectable sins plainly Jesus Christ absolutely refuses to allow. In His eyes avarice, pride, contempt, refusal to forgive, hypocrisy, are at least as bad as fornication or adultery or violence. In some sense the respectable sins are more dangerous. "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you." It is not that our Lord fails to lay a very severe discipline on sexual and other passions. He pronounces a tremendous judgment on sins of passion. But it is on the respectable sins that He lays the greater stress. And this makes a great difference when we come to find the social application of His doctrine.

(2) If we can imagine someone inspired with the modern democratic spirit, as it commonly appears, listening to Jesus as He taught in Galilee, it is obvious that sometimes he would have heard what would give him unfeigned satisfaction. But the satisfaction would have been soon checked and perhaps turned into resentment. For modern democracy, as Walt Whitman said, "The average man of a land at last only is important,"[1] and the rights of man as man are its theme. But he would quickly perceive that Jesus Christ would not take men as He found them: He was creating a sort of spiritual aristocracy in the world. No disadvantages, indeed,

[1] *Democratic Vistas*, p. 35.

were to exclude anyone from His society. Its gates were open. There was full forgiveness and a welcome for all. But the price was tremendous. He would note how Jesus chose His apostles from among fairly well-to-do and good-living workmen; but that He subjected them to a preliminary moral and spiritual discipline of the most searching kind. And however attractive His teaching to the general heart of man, He was repellent towards all cheap advances and offers. If He gave all, He first demanded all. He was plainly creating a company or brotherhood which, however wide its horizon should prove to be, was to insist on moral duties rather than on rights, and He would by no means take men as He found them. This great consideration we shall always have to keep in view. It is a consequence of this principle that though it is quite true that Jesus stands pre-eminent among teachers as proclaiming the common fatherhood of God and the consequent brotherhood of men, yet neither He nor the apostolic teachers ever speak of mankind *as they stand* as already sons of God, nor are the terms "brothers" or "brotherhood" used except of fellow-Israelites or fellow-members of the Church, the "regenerated" community. Thus though all men are meant for sonship and brotherhood, yet it is necessary for each man to acquire or re-acquire the status.[1]

[1] John i. 12 gives the principle. I doubt if we are justified even in Matt. xxv. 40 in treating "these my brethren" as = all men in need.

(3) In spite of the demand of Jesus for renunciation of all that the worldly world values (to which we shall return)—in spite of the tremendous severity of His moral claim, which may be truly described as making of His disciples a spiritual aristocracy in the world—yet He does not appear among the great ascetic teachers of mankind. If, indeed, asceticism means simply self-discipline, Jesus is, of course, ascetic: but so far as asceticism means any hatred of the body or disparagement of material things as such, or the exaltation of the pure intellect in detachment from ordinary human feeling—such asceticism as comes from the East but has also frequently infected the West—or, again, such asceticism as would have us regard physical pain as in itself pleasing to God and, if self-inflicted, a sign of spirituality—it appears to be alien to our Lord's spirit. He prepared Himself for His mission by a long fast, and He regarded voluntary abstinence—that is, fasting—as a normal religious exercise, but He never laid any emphasis on it: He gladly accepted the hard life which His mission involved—but He never appears as seeking pain or suffering for its own sake. He loved health and regarded the sicknesses, mental and physical, in which Palestine abounded as works of the Evil One to be resisted and expelled. All that He Himself finally suffered sprang, inevitably and without His seeking it, out of the double root of obedience and of sympathy with the sufferings of men. He participated in all the natural pleasures of men. So

far from being classed with ascetics such as John the Baptist, His enemies chose rather to disparage Him as "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." He would have men, like the Psalmist, "love life and see good days"; only they must look well to see that things which appeared desirable were really good. As Troeltsch says, "His religion was active, not contemplative—heroic rather than ascetic."[1]

(4) But if the Church of Jesus was to go out into the world as in some sense a spiritual aristocracy, it was to be of the poor or those who were ready to be as the poor. In particular, its intellectual equipment—its ideas about God—was given to it by Jesus, not in the abstract terms of the philosopher, but in the terms which speak to the heart of the common man. The later Jewish theology, like Greek philosophy, had been tending to withdraw its transcendent God far off from the world. It had learnt to dread anthropomorphism above all things. It even feared to name God, and talked about "the heavens" instead. But Jesus, by choosing to concentrate all His thought of God in the term *Father*, suddenly and abruptly reversed this process. It was not that He eliminated severity out of the thought of God. Quite the contrary. But He brought Him home to the human heart. He emphasized His personality. Not in lofty regions of philosophic abstraction did He find the god-

[1] Troeltsch's *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen*, pp. 41, 45.

like in man, but in the emotions of love and pity and indignation against cruelty and wrong, and in the regions of moral choice and practical action. Certainly He would have us believe that God is more really intelligible to the heart than to the head. Certainly He set an immense value on childlike faith—the faith which whole-heartedly accepts the divine word. Certainly the realized kingdom of heaven was to offer no prerogative position to the intellectual any more than to the rich. The kingdom was to belong to those who should have the courage to put God first in all their activities and to believe His word, and, in the light of His purpose of love for all men, should set themselves whole-heartedly to minister to all.

Finally, (5), the method of the kingdom, as Jesus preached it, is purely the method of peaceful appeal. As He turned His back on the Sadducees, the worldly politicians, and on the Pharisees, the scrupulous but arrogant ecclesiastics, and on the ascetic Essene communities, of whom we hear no word in the Gospels, so He turned His back on the Zealots or leaders of a militant nationalism. Nothing, I think, can be more directly contrary to the method of Jesus than the method of militant revolution. It is a mistake to speak of the Cleansing of the Temple with the scourge of small cords as an act of physical force. Jesus was a solitary and weary man against a crowd. The force was wholly on their side. If He overcame, it was by the weight of a moral

authority which they dared not resist. And in the advice given just before Gethsemane to the disciples to buy swords, for they would need them, I think we are bound to see the touch of irony. Of what use would the "two swords" be at the mention of which He said, "It is enough"? Also when Peter attempted to use one of them he is at once reproved. The advice then to "sell their garments and buy swords" must be ironical. It meant that they were going into such physical danger as would naturally suggest arming themselves. It cannot be reasonably taken as reversing the emphasis on unresisting meekness which had characterized the whole teaching and method of Jesus. It was this which, taken with His demand upon His disciple for world-renunciation, has constituted a serious difficulty which we must face in the next lecture.

Let us seek to summarize the chief conclusion we have so far reached. Jesus of Nazareth, who claimed to be the Christ who was to come, set Himself to proclaim the promised kingdom of God and to organize the community of those who believed in Him to be the New Israel. It was to be a community—in the world but not of it—based on the fullest recognition of brotherhood under the fatherhood of God, to the exclusion of any selfish claim for a privileged position, and on the acknowledgment in every single soul of an equal and infinite worth. At the same time Jesus wholly refused to take men into His community as He found them. The moral claim He made on men for

absolute self-surrender was extreme. The community which was to be the kingdom of God on earth was to constitute a sort of spiritual aristocracy—but one open to all men without regard to position or special qualification, and without regard to their past, on the sole condition of surrender to God and faith in His word. So the new community, the true Israel, was to go out into the world—poor and defenceless but triumphant and joyful—in happy fellowship, divine and human. It was thus quite right of Seeley to declare that the keynote of the teaching of Jesus was "the enthusiasm of humanity"—of humanity, that is, or it ought to be and may be.[1]

[1] There is still no book about the teaching of our Lord which can rival *Ecce Homo*.

LECTURE III

THE EARLY CHURCH

I HAVE endeavoured to establish the position that Jesus Christ did indeed deliver an ethical and social teaching of a very marked character which was to be the basis of the life of His Church, the New Israel—the visible society to which He was giving a rudimentary organization. This Church was to be the vestibule of the promised kingdom of God—its representative on earth in all its spiritual characteristics—and was to spread throughout the world and endure till "the end of the age," a quite indefinite period. This ethical and social teaching of Jesus Christ was plainly calculated to effect a profound revolution in existing society: but we note that our Lord did not seek to supply the Church which He refounded with any of those powers or safeguards which philosophers and politicians have assumed that earthly states require, if they are to make progress and be held together. He contemplated no physical compulsion to enforce its authority. He inculcated submission to wrong and violence almost without limit. His disciples were not to resent or be surprised by persecution even to death. In fact, there was nothing in our Lord's language to suggest that He was founding a state among other states. Famous sayings of His—

"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" and "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?"[1] and "My kingdom is not of this world" —imply that what He was founding was not a state, but a missionary community indifferent to State boundaries and uncritically submissive to State authorities, unless its members were required to deny their faith. It was to move out into the whole world bearing within itself a triumphant assurance of survival and victory solely in virtue of its faith in God and its possession by the Spirit of its unseen Head. Such is the picture which we gather from the Gospels.[2]

There were, of course, in the Greco-Roman Empire plenty of voluntary organizations existing to promote some special kind of philosophical doctrine or religious worship, and these associations owned no territorial boundaries and claimed no political power. Israel of the Dispersion was such an association; and the Church started by

[1] See Luke xii. 13 ff. St. Paul no doubt would have us believe that questions of property ought to come up for decision by the authority of the Christian community: and that such decisions ought to be recognized as given in the name of Christ (see 1 Cor. vi. 1–8). What Christ disclaims is any authority to act as a judge in the Jewish community which was rejecting the gospel of the kingdom and was penetrated with false ideas about the value of riches. In such a community He neither held nor could hold any such authority.

[2] I believe that a sound historical criticism forces us to believe that the discourses of Jesus in the Upper Chamber, as given in John xiv–xvi, are substantially authentic. The record of the Acts and the implications of the Epistles are alike unintelligible, unless the disciples had been taught to believe that, after Christ's disappearance from the earth, He would still be with them through the Spirit, as His Agent, and that the witness they were to bear in the world would still be His witness.

following on its tracks. Of the Hellenistic organizations our Lord shows no sign of consciousness, while of the Jewish Dispersion He was doubtless conscious. But the Roman authorities were, on the whole, favourable to the dispersed Jewish community, whereas we notice that our Lord seems to have anticipated persecution for His New Israel; plainly, however, He did not contemplate arming it with any other than purely spiritual powers of survival.

In giving this account of our Lord's message and of His foundation of the Church I am asking for a decisive rejection of three positions:—

(1) The position that Jesus concerned Himself only or primarily with the salvation of the individual soul. The word "salvation" carries with it from the Old Testament into the New an essentially social meaning. It means still the welfare and peace and victory of the Israel of God: it is the coming of the kingdom: and the salvation of the individual lies in his participation in the kingdom.[1]

(2) The position that He founded no visible society to be His permanent organ in this world, but contemplated only an immediate end of this world-order and the revelation from heaven by a purely divine act of a new world wholly supernatural. Such a position can only be maintained by ignoring more than half of the evidence.

(3) Any position which represents Jesus Christ as a political reformer who has for his object the

[1] For the meaning of salvation in the O.T. see Pedersen's *Israel* (Oxford Press), pp. 330 ff.

establishment or promotion of the kingdom of God by external methods of government, by the exercise of force or as a state among states. He did not contemplate what in later language was called a *societas perfecta* having within itself all the resources of a state to maintain and defend itself. Thus it is quite true that Jesus Christ "turned His back upon politics" in the sense that He concerned Himself only with the establishment of a fellowship having purely spiritual or ethical aims. He cannot be said to have contemplated as within His horizon anything like a state-church or church-state; similarly, the suggestion that He would give any sanction to the establishment of the kingdom of God by the methods of revolutionary violence, or, according to the modern phrase, "wave the red flag," appears to be equally wrong-headed. No doubt the Church in history has taken roads which our Lord does not appear to have contemplated, and we shall have to consider whether such roads were really open to it in accordance with His will. But for the moment I want you to consider only a quite opposite question—the question, namely, whether our Lord by His emphasis on passive submission to all kinds of injustice, by His refusal to meet force with force, and by the claim which He made for absolute detachment from earthly ties—including even the home—was not really proclaiming a quite impracticable ideal, which, in fact, was almost from the start abandoned by His Church, and

which cannot be treated seriously as an ideal for practical life at all. This is to many people a very formidable difficulty.

I

Certainly we cannot explain away such words as occur in the Sermon on the Mount—"Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also":[1] or such a tremendous pronouncement as that made by our Lord when He turned to the multitude following Him and deliberately repelled them with the words: "If any man cometh after me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters . . . he cannot be my disciple. . . . Therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."[2]

But there are two consideration to be entertained, bearing respectively on the two typical passages which have just been quoted.

(1) Jesus Christ as a teacher, like other teachers who have made the profoundest impression on the imagination of men, loved to present

[1] Matt. v. 39–40.

[2] Luke xiv. 25–33. We cannot explain away such direct language; and surely no one would have invented such words for the Christ.

ideas to His hearers in extreme forms. We notice the same tendency in great men of letters of many ages and countries. So the Don Quixote and Sancho Panza of Cervantes, and in great part Shakespeare's characters, or Charles Dickens's characters, are extreme types. They embody tendencies or passions carried to the uttermost without any regard to modifying circumstances such as occur in real life. And similarly the popular proverbs of all nations are commonly expressed in extreme examples, leaving some plainly necessary qualification to be expressed in another and contradictory example—like our proverb, "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves," with its opposite, "Penny wise, pound foolish." Our Lord was a teacher who addressed Himself to the popular imagination, and His methods were proverbs and parables. Thus it should not surprise us that He put things in extremes, and startled men by paradoxes. This has been commonly, and to a large extent justly, recognized. Thus it is not safe to take one of our Lord's proverbial utterances and translate it into a literal or universal direction for conduct. He Himself who said "Resist not the evil," or "the evil person," did resist the doers of evil and expelled them in terror, when He drove the marketers and money-changers out of the Temple Courts, though this was not, of course, done in self-protection. He who said "Swear not at all" did Himself consent to be put on His oath in the trial before

the Jewish Court;[1] and He did Himself[2] claim justice: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" It is also true that our Lord did not bid *all* men abandon natural ties, but sent some men back to their homes; and that He assigns the highest sanction and the most unqualified obligation to the marriage tie; and warmly blesses Zacchæus, though he does not apparently abandon his business as a publican, nor his property completely. But when all these qualifications are admitted there still remains a fact which Englishmen have been loath to recognize. Jesus does claim of His disciples an extreme concessiveness and submission to wrong, so far as their own pride or self-interest is concerned. And further, from the beginning He does detach those at least whom He means to train as His agents and instruments from their homes and their businesses. He does demand of them entire renunciation of home and property, literally and actually.

(2) Here, however, we come to the second consideration which it is necessary to entertain for the understanding of Jesus—His time was short. It became evident that His message was to receive only a scanty measure of acceptance in existing Jewish society. He was soon contemplating failure and death. But He was preparing for the greater future. He was training men to whom His gospel could be entrusted after He was gone. For this purpose He needs

[1] According to Matt. xxvi. 63. [2] According to John xviii. 23.

such men as would make the venture of faith in its extremist form. They must be as free and as detached as St. Francis would have his Mendicants be. They were not, indeed, to be exactly like Franciscan or Buddhist mendicants. For when they were sent out on their preparatory mission they were to go with something of the dignity of royal ambassadors, and claim support from the worthiest they could hear of in each place they visited. And when moving about with their Master there was, at least during a certain period, a company of women who followed to provide for them. Still the Lord could say, "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," and the disciples who followed Him were required to be absolutely detached from all earthly securities as well as from earthly ties.

But as we watch the development of our Lord's ministry we perceive that, more and more, it is of this preparation for the future by the training of the disciples—that is, the Twelve—that He appears to be exclusively thinking. To join their wandering company is the only sort of "following" of Him or discipleship which Jesus is contemplating, when from time to time He addresses the multitude, or confronts individual offers of service,[1] with words that seem so sternly to refuse any lesser offer than that of absolute abandonment of all worldly ties.

[1] See Luke xiv. 25–33, cited above, and ix. 57–62, and cf. Troeltsch, p. 46: "Ist der Verzicht auf alle Güter die Bedingung des engeren Anschlusses an die eigentliche missionierende Jüngerschaft."

His method seemed, indeed, to be destined to failure at the last. His chosen instrument seems to break in His hands—even the Twelve cannot stand the strain. But Jesus foresaw better things, and, in fact, He succeeded. After His resurrection, at His final departure, when He blessed the Apostles, He left behind Him what He had wanted—a body of men who had accepted an unlimited liability—who were bound by no earthly ties—who had no relation to property and made no demand for pleasure—a body of men capable of anything. Thus if we are to understand the Gospels, it is necessary that we should recognize that what we have shown us there is a preparation, and not more. It is the enunciation of an ideal in its most startling form, and the preparation of a small body in which this ideal should be incarnate. But we shall make a fundamental mistake if we regard the Gospels as standing alone. They are only really intelligible if you take them as indissolubly tied up with the records of the first Church, as given in the Acts and the Epistles, which for the first time present us with the finished product. It was, we must remember, out of the heart of this Church that the Gospels were written as the records of the great beginning or the initial experience. Then when we read the Acts and the Epistles, we find ourselves in the midst of a society which indeed believes in the kingdom of God, not only as in prospect, but also as having come—which has broken with the old world

to be absorbed in the new—which has died in order to live. There has been no lowering of the moral level set by their Lord and no compromise with sin or worldliness or selfishness. There is also still the recognition of special vocations among them—such as the celibate vocation—"to attend upon the Lord without distraction." But plainly as we study the Epistles, we find ourselves in the midst of communities which, it is assumed, are as a whole living the normal human life of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, though among the Christians this last relationship is wholly changed in spirit. They are communities in which men work and get returns for their work done; communities over which there is a corporate authority presiding which, if it has no legal means of enforcing its directions, yet has moral and spiritual means of an even perilous effectiveness, and which can and ought to take account of injustices and wrongs within its own body. And private property and private rights are conditionally recognized.[1] Further, the community owns its obligations to the Imperial Government under which it lives and to which it looks for justice. All this, it is assumed, is in no real contradiction to the teaching of the Master. What we have, then, in the Gospels is specially the preparation of the instrument. And if we have learned this lesson, we can distinguish in the teaching, as we listen to it in

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 1–6.

the Gospels, what in it concerns the abiding nature of the kingdom of God and what belongs specially to the moment of preparation and its special exigencies. It is, however, only reasonable that in drawing this distinction we should pay heed to the sense in which the primitive Church understood their Lord's teaching.

II

So we turn with a sense of profound interest to see how the ethics of Jesus are seen to apply themselves in the first Christian communities—to begin with, in the earliest community at Jerusalem.

The sense of community life, under the Apostles as directors, is intense. "They continued steadfast in the Apostles' teaching and the fellowship, and in the Breaking of Bread and the prayers." Never was there a less individualistic religion. This sense of fellowship in the new community does not wait for persecution to evoke it. It appears even while their relation to the general population in the capital appears to have been friendly, and the authorities have need to be cautious in repressing the new sect. The sense of fraternity among them overwhelms the sense of private property. "They had all things common." "They sold their possessions, and brought the price and laid it at the Apostles' feet." Soon, in face of complaints from their Greek-speaking members

against their Aramaic brethren that they are not being fairly treated in the daily administration of supplies, they have special officers appointed to look after the administration of the common fund. This communism, we note, is voluntary: it is not contrary to any law of the community that an individual, if he will, should keep his own property. It is only a fraudulent pretence of giving it all up, while some of it was in fact kept back, which, in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, can obtain no forgiveness but only the swiftest judgment.

But this early enthusiasm at Jerusalem is very far from perfection. First, it was strictly nationalistic, and therefore narrow. The Jerusalem community, which had seemed foremost in the race of love, when later it is presented with the requirement of admitting Gentiles freely into fellowship, without their becoming Jews in practice, is found to fail sadly; and it becomes the centre of disaffection towards St. Paul's unrestricted liberalism. Very soon Judaistic Christianity will cease to count. It falls out of the main stream of progress. Also, whether because it was unwise in its administration, or because it passed through exceptional trials, at any rate the Church at Jerusalem became a pauper community, dependent on the charity of the other churches. But if we are right in supposing that the Epistle of James really expresses the spirit of "the Lord's brother" who presided over the Church of Jerusalem, we can see how stern is his demand

that the spirit of brotherhood shall control the Jewish-Christian communities. It is assumed in that lovely letter[1] that in the communities to which he is writing the poor will have become better off in virtue of their membership and the rich poorer.[2] True religion is to be found only in looking after the helpless and in thorough unworldliness. James is indignant if in their assemblies a rich man in fine clothes is treated better than a poor man in vile raiment. Any such respect of persons is an outrage on the royal law and an insult to their Master who is "the Glory" or manifestation of God. James has his Master's horror of riches, and of any kind of ambition to hold a superior position over other men. He sees in acquisitiveness a root of all evils. He thunders like one of the old prophets against the wealth which grinds the faces of the poor, and denounces upon it the judgment of God.

When we pass out into the Gentile world, which provides the background for the other Epistles and for the Acts, we are given a living and attractive picture of what Christian brotherhood meant on that background. The Church is, of course, a quite "non-political" body. Imperial or municipal authority or influence is quite out of its reach. The enemy most in evidence is the Jews, who in city after city do their best to harass the Christian evangelists

[1] See *The Epistle of St. James and Judaic Christianity*, by Gerald H. Rendall (Cambridge Press).

[2] Jas. i. 9.

and embroil them with the Roman authorities as disturbers of the public peace and setters up of a rival to Cæsar.[1] Only at Ephesus their success in drawing men away from the worship of Artemis provokes antagonism from the pagan tradesmen, who made their wealth out of the world-wide popularity of that worship. But on the whole the municipal and imperial authorities do the new sect justice, and alike St. Paul and St. Peter are found inculcating reverence to the Emperor and the representatives of the Government, as to divinely constituted ministers of justice, though the Christians are bidden to settle their disputes among themselves within their own body and not come before external courts. The Christian duty of honour and love to all men is recognized. But the gulf between the heathen society and the Christian Church is obviously very wide. "Those within" are sharply distinguished from "those without," and it is only within that the name of brotherhood is named.[2] There is, perhaps, no single instance in the New Testament in which those outside the community, Jewish or Christian, are called "brothers." There is an intense sense of corporate life. Salvation is in community. The sacraments administered in the Church are at once channels of individual gifts—new birth, the Spirit, the communicated life of Christ—but they are also

[1] Acts xvii. 6. The words "These men that have turned the world upside down" cannot reasonably be supposed to have any reference to the social effects of Christian ethics.

[2] See above, p. 54.

authoritative rites of the society. The spiritual life of the individual is thus inseparably bound up into the community. So Christianity appears as a way of life—involving a doctrine no doubt, but first of all a life and that strongly social. The Epistles are ethical through and through, and the ethic is a social ethic. No doubt the struggle to maintain the ethical level, in communities mainly recruited from a heathen world with a very low ethical standard, is a very severe struggle. Thus there is constant emphasis on the necessity for sexual purity; and where the Christian standard is grossly and persistently violated, whether in this or any other respect, excommunication has to be resorted to. And St. Paul labours to secure that it shall be not merely an act of apostolic authority, but an act of the whole body repudiating something fatal to its own life. The sense of fellowship, moreover, is maintained not only within the local community, but in the relation of one community with another.[1]

Further, what fellowship means in material matters is made very plain. Every man is to work for his living. "If a man will not work, neither let him eat." But those who cannot work are to be provided for out of the common fund. Old and helpless persons who have relations of their own should, indeed, find their support

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 36. There is a common "tradition" binding all the churches in matters of discipline, and also in matters of faith (Gal. i. 8–9) and a common obligation of mutual charity (2 Cor. viii. 3–14).

from them and not be forced to come upon the Church; but for the resourceless the Church must provide. And those who are rich and who earn more than enough to support their own families are to be willing contributors to the common fund. The love of money—the desire to accumulate wealth—is a root of every kind of evil. The relation of one to another is to be that of members in one body, in which, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. A splendid sense of spiritual equality pervades the atmosphere. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." We can see, indeed, that such an ideal of brotherhood was not maintained without difficulty, any more than the standard of sexual relations. It is doubtful whether the "mysteries" of the heathen world had been in any effective sense brotherhoods of mutual help, and whether consequently the Gentile converts had had any more training in brotherhood than in purity. Thus it will not surprise us to find selfishness and class division showing themselves at Corinth even at "the Lord's supper." But the evidence, on the whole, shows that both as regards sexual relations and as regards the duties of brotherhood the struggle to maintain the Christian standard was successful, though it seems to have become intense towards the close of the apostolic period.

III

In the sub-apostolic and later period prior to the Edict of Constantine we find the rapidly spreading Christian Church maintaining its high standard both of personal morality and of fellowship; and if we seek for the causes of this success we shall find them to be specially these:—

(1) *First* must be ranked the elaborate care which was taken in the moral training of catechumens.[1] The first step was the testing of aspirants as to their motives and intentions. That was followed up by elaborate instruction as to the occupations and pursuits which must be abandoned before admission to the catechumenate. Every occupation connected with idolatry (and this was a very comprehensive category) must be abandoned. Thus every form of public office which involved such connection, or, again, which involved its holder in the infliction of capital punishment or the shedding of blood, was disallowed.[2] Whether service in the army was permissible, or with what limitations, was long a matter of dispute. So also the question whether a Christian could be a school teacher, seeing he must teach the pagan classics and observe the pagan festivals. Certainly he could

[1] The facts, admirably set in order, are to be found in F. C. Brightman's "Terms of Communion" in *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*.

[2] On the gradual passing away of the restriction, see Troeltsch, p. 125.

not continue in any connection with the public theatres or spectacles, or with any form of magic or sexual immorality. Later, when the candidate had given satisfaction as to his intentions and was admitted to the catechumenate, he received further instruction in moral duties and, later, in the truths of the creed. The catechumenate was a prolonged testing—lasted for two or three years, the final Lent being a special period of more intimate instruction; and the baptism, with laying-on of hands, which followed at Easter, was a ceremony plainly expressive of dying to an old life in order to rise to the new—a ceremony of the greatest simplicity but of the most impressive solemnity, leading immediately to participation in the eucharist, the central act of Christian fellowship. This elaborate preparation for baptism contrasts with the speed with which it was administered in the earliest period, as appears in the Acts, though there again it would seem that the first act of confession—that "Jesus is the Christ" or "the Lord"—was followed by more detailed instruction after initiation. But the change to a highly systematic and prolonged preparation was doubtless forced upon the Church by the moral necessities of the situation. We should remember that the horror of a lapse into sin after baptism was intense; so that everything possible was done to test the sincere resolution of the convert before his initiation. For centuries the predominant idea of the Church was still that of a society dedicated to a holy life of self-

discipline and intimate fellowship, rather than that of a society holding special doctrines. The infant children of Christians were apparently baptized from the beginning,[1] though hesitation on the subject is frequently apparent. But the original idea of baptism included the response of the individual will, quite as obviously as the bestowal of divine grace. Thus the normal kind of baptism was the baptism of the adult; and in the case of infants the requirement of sponsorship was no doubt made very real.

Besides the severe preliminary sifting of candidates for membership in the Christian Community, there was also from the beginning a system of public discipline, resulting in the excommunication of any member whose actions were an occasion of gross scandal; which again was followed, when adequate "satisfaction" had been given, by absolution or readmission to communion. This system was more or less elaborately developed through the early centuries: but it appears in all its essential features in St. Paul's Epistles.[2]

(2) But there was another equally effective cause tending to keep at its high level the Christian standard of conduct—and that was the danger involved in becoming a Christian. It involved a position of outlawry from ordinary pagan society.

[1] The practice probably passed to the Christian Church from the Jewish habit of baptizing the infant children of proselytes.

[2] See 1 Cor. v. 1-5, 9-13, and 2 Cor. ii. 6-11. It makes no difference that the brother "absolved" in 2 Cor. is a different person from the brother excommunicated in 1 Cor.

The Jews had been in the Roman Empire a race apart and under popular suspicion, and the Christian sect inherited their position. As will have been seen, they excluded themselves in great measure from ordinary society by their strict refusal to have anything to do with idolatry, for idolatry was connected with almost all the ordinary associations of life and with the trade-guilds. But also it appears that they were deliberately boycotted by non-Christian society. The False Prophet (or spirit of paganism) in the Apocalypse[1] appears as decreeing that "no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name." In fact, every kind of prejudice and slander attached itself in popular estimation to the profession of the Christian name. It was the task of the apologists to try to mitigate this cloud of suspicion and hatred. Also to popular suspicion arising from the bottom of society was added the risk of persecution from above—from the centre of imperial authority. Of this we hear the first mutterings in St. Peter's Epistle. In the Apocalypse it is the all-absorbing fact. The Empire so favourably judged by St. Paul has now become the great beast of persecution—drunk with the blood of the saints. This prophetic language is no doubt extreme and one-sided. The Empire, in fact, persecuted only intermittently and at first reluctantly. Only after some centuries did it deliberately set itself once

[1] xiii. 17.

and again to extirpate the Christian name—until such an enterprise became manifestly hopeless. But throughout the period, down to the edict of Constantine in the early fourth century, the danger of persecution was always before the eyes of the convert to Christianity. This no doubt severely restricted application for membership. One would suppose that a society which openly professed the responsibility of the Brotherhood for the support of its members would have become the prey of self-interested impostors, Such impostors there doubtless were, like the Peregrinus, nick-named Proteus, so amusingly described by the light-hearted and cynical sceptic, Lucian. But it does not appear that Christianity was seriously imperilled by such invaders: and the reason was doubtless that it was too dangerous to become a Christian. So it was that the high moral character of the Christian Church for the first three centuries of its existence made it really a light shining in a dark world—a city set on a hill—the salt of the earth, according to its Lord's intention. So it was that it overcame all prejudices and suspicions and came to be regarded as, on the whole, the best religion for mankind—which is about what was meant by "the conversion of the Empire."

There would seem to have been many points at which the morality of the Christians struck the imagination of the world. There was the courage of their martyrs—men and women and girls—though, be it remembered, there were very many

who were apostates in the days of trial. Again, there was their sexual purity. The world had never seen anything like the purity of their young men and women. We hear also of their commercial honesty. But it would seem as if nothing impressed the world so much as their brotherliness to one another. The scoffing Lucian in the second century bears effective witness to this. After sneering at "the man" whom the Christians worship—"the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account"—he goes on: "The activity of these people in dealing with any matter that affects their community is extraordinary; they spare no trouble, no expense. . . . These misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, which explains the contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion which is so common among them: and then it was impressed upon them by their original lawgiver that they were all brothers from the moment that they were converted, and deny the Gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws. All this they take quite on trust, with the result that they despise all worldly goods alike, regarding them merely as common property."[1]

Again, the pagan Cæcilius, in the dialogue of Minucius Felix, though he speaks of the Christians with the utmost contempt and bitterness, yet is

[1] See Bevan's *Later Greek Religion* (Dent), pp. 173–4, and Harnack's *Expansion*, i. 225–6.

represented as saying: "They manage to recognize one another by secret signs and marks, loving each other almost before they are acquainted."

The spirit of close fellowship in the Christian Community and their sense of mutual responsibility generated among them a sort of "political economy," or communal administration, of their own. It expressed itself in maxims such as these —that every Christian must be a workman:[1] (they adhered to St. Paul's maxim: "If a man will not work neither let him eat")—that it is part of the business of the local community to find work for its members and for new immigrants from other cities (We should remember that, though a Christian would be outside the trade-guilds, yet there was no hindrance to setting him up in a trade by simply giving him a start with the necessary tools. Industry was individual) —that if anyone is too old or too sick to work, or is otherwise destitute, he must be provided for by the common fund of the Church—that those who have more than enough to supply their own family are bound alike in justice and charity to hand over their superfluity to supply the wants of others. Christian charity, we gather, overflowed the boundaries of the Church upon the world outside. But it was within the brotherhood that it received its organized expression. Doubtless it created a new sense of security in life for the members of the Church. The churches must

[1] Cf. Troeltsch, p. 117 *n.*, and with especial reference to the clergy, p. 127.

have consisted of a heterogeneous company of all the races which contributed to the slave population of the Empire. But love was enough to bind them together. Truly it appeared to men that the Christians constituted a new race, and that there was amongst them a social life worth living, ennobled by heavenly fellowship and abounding in a warm and comfortable humanity. No wonder that the Church progressed apace and surmounted all obstacles.

We find in the Christian fathers vigorous denunciations of all keeping of private wealth, such as is not needed for the support of the possessor's own family. Such selfish keeping of wealth from the common fund they call—not lack of generosity only, but injustice or theft. It is not that they deny the necessity of private property. In a world of sin private property must exist, and the law must maintain it. But it is only to be justified when it is reduced to the minimum needed to meet the reasonable requirements of life according to a man's condition. God gave the earth with its resources for the common good; and the spirit of love and justice must keep it so.[1]

Here, then, in the early centuries we see Christianity as, most obviously, Christ intended it to be—an elect body, a spiritual aristocracy, for which, however, there was no qualification necessary except a good will; in obvious distinction from the world around it, and liable to

[1] Cf. Troeltsch, p. 115; Vernon Bartlet in *Property* (Macmillan), pp. 98 ff.; and A. J. Carlisle, *Mediæv. Pol. Theory*, ii, pp. 120 ff.

persecution on account of its pugnacious distinctiveness and refusal of compromise; but forcibly winning its way all the time by its attractive goodness and brotherliness. It is a most comforting picture to behold. In spite of constantly revealed weaknesses and defects in the Early Church, there we truly see genuine Christianity in the one undivided body making the great catholic claim, and showing its power to respond to that great name of catholic by unifying classes and races in one all-embracing fellowship; able also to keep together in unity local churches of different doctrinal and other tendencies; and to do this purely and simply (as it boasted) by the weapons of love and persuasion without any control of the machinery of government, or any desire or power to exercise on its own behalf the constraining force of the sword or the police. Under these conditions it had, of course, no power to abolish slavery; but from the time when St. Paul wrote the Epistle to Philemon it showed its moral power to undermine the institution and render it negative, by the overmastering sense of the spiritual equality of the children of God.

It is true that outside the Christian Church there was, in Stoicism which was the current philosophy of the early Empire, a theory of universal humanitarianism and a profession of the honour due to all men, simply as men, in accordance with the "law of nature." But it must be acknowledged that the Christian Church was able to give its "enthusiasm for humanity" practical

effect as the Stoics never did or attempted to do. "We must not think," says Troeltsch, " of any practical realization (*Verwirklichung*) of this (Stoic) ideal. It was ascribed by the Stoics to the Golden Age of original man and was thought of as irretrievably lost; only a new world-order (such as according to the Stoic doctrine of cycles must arise after an interval on the destruction of the present world-order) can begin again from this starting-point."[1]

Something should be said as to the sense in which the Early Church may be called democratic. Of course, the Christian Church never can be really that. It is essentially a theocracy. A divine revelation controls it, involving not only a definable doctrine but a definable standard of life. It lives in acceptance of a creed and an order which it has no power to dispense with or to alter. But, within this accepted authority and order, the distinction of rulers and ruled, of priests and people, of teachers and taught, may be greater or less. From the first—in St. Paul's Epistles, as in all the later history—we are bound to recognize the authority of office, as well as the overwhelming influence of personality. But in the early period the distinction of clergy and laity was very much less than it became in the later patristic and mediæval periods. The belief that every individual was endowed with the same Holy Spirit—that the whole body was priestly—really prevailed. The affairs of the Church were

[1] Troeltsch, p. 53 ; Bevan, pp. 103-14.

(as in St. Paul's Epistles) really the affairs of the whole body. All the members were concerned in its disciplinary actions. An excommunicated person did not merely fall under the discipline of the bishop, but felt himself excluded from the whole beloved fellowship, and afterwards, if he showed true penitence, welcomed again by the brotherhood. And the representative principle of government—that "he who presides over all must be elected by all"—was for centuries almost as strongly insisted upon as the necessity of sacramental ordination.

It should be recollected that the basic idea of Christian fellowship lay in the family. God was the Father. Fatherhood was the principle of government. The Church dealt with its members as sons rather than subjects. It was centuries before the idea of church authority became quite recoloured by the conception derived from Roman Imperialism. One final consideration must not be omitted. The Apocalypse alone among the books of the New Testament views the imperial Government—envisaged as the Great Beast of violence, supported by the False Prophet and controlled by the Dragon (Satan)—with unmitigated disgust. Rome, the seat of government, is represented by Babylon, the horrible Harlot, seated upon the Beast. It would be supposed that, if the feeling of this apocalyptic vision had permeated the mind of the Early Church, it would then become a hot-bed of fierce hostility to the Empire. But nothing of the

sort was the case. On the contrary, in spite of virulent misrepresentation and recurrent persecution under which they suffered, the Church writers show themselves conscious of a divine purpose, which had raised up the Roman Empire to unify the world and so provide a seed-plot for the spread of the Catholic religion. It was a great element in the "divine preparation; and they speak of the Empire as destined to endure till the end of time, with a feeling of religious awe, like their pagan neighbours. Moreover, they had welcomed the Stoic idea of an eternal and divine law of justice and right resident in the universal reason of mankind, which ought to find expression in human law, to which consequently the persecuted Church can make its appeal, and which supplies to every human conscience a ground for the acceptance of the fuller Revealed Law of which the Church was the guardian. Revelation was not alien to natural reason; nor Roman Law to the Divine Justice.[1] If Roman Law made itself in fact an engine for persecution, that was because it was false to its own principle; and then it must be met with a simple refusal of obedience. "We ought to obey God rather than men."

[1] The explicit recognition of the Empire as the divine preparation for the spread of the universal Gospel comes chiefly in fourth- and fifth-century writers (see Gore's *Ephesians* (John Murray), Ap. *Note* A), but see quotation from Melito (second century) on Euseb., *H.E.* iv. 21. For the "eternity" of Rome, see Troeltsch's *Sozial-lehren,* pp. 112 *n.* For the Stoic ideas adopted by Christianity, Troeltsch, pp. 146 ff. Ambrose *de officiis* is largely built up of Stoic material through Cicero.

The Church of the first three centuries has many blots upon it: but it presents a fascinating picture. As we see its influence spreading and rising, we wonder what things will be like when it has become dominant. But the transition from a Church sometimes grudgingly tolerated and sometimes fiercely persecuted to a Church seated in the high places of government and power was a tremendous transition of which we shall next have to consider the conditions and the consequences.

The questions what lessons for ourselves we can draw from the conduct and the conditions of the first Christian Church, we shall still defer.[1]

[1] Besides the books already referred to in notes, Harnack's *Expansion of Christianity* will be found invaluable on the topics of this chapter.

LECTURE IV

THE MEDIÆVAL CHURCH

So far we have been contemplating the Church as it was before Constantine's Edict of Toleration. It constituted a sort of spiritual aristocracy, a wide-spreading catholic community (based on humanity—not on nationalism), in the world but not of it. We see it subject to obloquy and recurrent persecutions, at first local, but later general organized attempts on the part of the Imperial authority to stamp out the Christian religion as a spiritual rival to itself. Under these attacks we find the Church without the power or even the will to resist persecution by rebellion, again and again watering the soil of the Empire with the blood of its martyrs, but constantly claiming justice, as something which pagans no less than Christians were bound to recognize as the natural law and the divine requirement upon rulers. Throughout this period it maintains, not by any means perfectly of course, but on the whole, the high level of spiritual, moral and social life of which the New Testament sets the standard. This level was maintained partly through the strong corporate discipline exercised by each local church—partly by the fact that it was still dangerous to become a Christian, and men were not likely to venture upon it without serious

purpose. We still find ourselves in an atmosphere in which the idea of compulsion as an instrument of religious propaganda is repudiated as intolerable. "Nothing," they cried, "is so voluntary as religion. . . . Religion practised under compulsion is no religion at all."[1] Christianity also still stands as essentially the religion of peace, repudiating bloodshed. Athanasius can still treat war waged by Christian people as something inconceivable: even the most barbarous tribes, when converted to Christ, must perforce beat their ploughshares into pruning-hooks.[2] It is from this period of the Church's life, already past, that Augustine, seventy years after Constantine's Edict of Toleration, draws his picture of the City of God—a city without earthly frontiers, without distinctions of nationality or secular status, of civilization or barbarism; a city which comprises the dead no less than the living; a city whose citizenship depends upon participation in a common faith, obedience to common laws, inspiration by a common Spirit—a heavenly *civitas*, set up in the midst of the earthly, yet for ever distinct from it, and founded upon a contrary principle.[3]

[1] Tertullian, *ad scap.* p. 2: "Nec relligionis est cogere relligionem," etc. Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* v. 20: "Nihil est tam voluntarium quam relligio . . . si animus sacrificantis aversus est, jam sublata, jam nulla est." Chrysostom, *de S. Babyla*: "It is not lawful for Christians to overthrow error by violence and force."

[2] *De Incarn.*, pp. 51–2.

[3] Aug., *De civ. Dei*, xi. 1, xix. 17.

I

But the future was by no means to resemble the past.

(1) After Constantine's Edict of Toleration in A.D. 313 it ceased to be dangerous to become a Christian.[1] In fact, Christianity became the fashion, and after a short time it became the established religion of the Empire, so that henceforth it was highly dangerous to profess anything else. The result of this was that what has been commonly called " the conversion of the Empire" was in fact the opening wide of the gates of the Church to the inflooding world—a deeply corrupted and unconverted world indeed; and the average level of Christian living went down, as we may say, at a run. Eusebius, the type of the courtly bishop, the panegyrist of Constantine and of the new *régime*, already complains of the "unspeakable hypocrisy" of those who are creeping into the Church and making spurious professions of the Christian name. A little later the picture which Chrysostom gives us of the life of the society called Christian at Antioch and Constantinople, and the witness of Augustine in Africa and Salvian in Gaul—from the end of the fourth century—indicate that it had become no better than the average life of a nominally Christian civilization to-day. The public penitential dis-

[1] The words were: "We give to Christians and all men the free power of following whatever religion anyone has chosen."

cipline of the Church had obviously collapsed. All this had not, indeed, happened without a protest—in its own way a magnificent and effective protest—of the Christian conscience. I refer, of course, to the monastic movement—first of the solitaries and then of the communities—which began to gain strength about the time of the Edict of Toleration. An enormous number of individuals from the cities of the East, obeying a common impulse, went out into the deserts of Syria and Egypt—and were after a time for the most part organized into communities—to live the true life of union with God. John Cassian, who was a prototype of the modern "interviewer" and a master of his craft, in his *Institutes* and *Collations*[1] gave the West an account of his long experiences among the Egyptian hermits, and this latter book became the "speculum monasticum," the ideal of the monastic life for the West. The picture Cassian draws is a picture of a tremendous renunciation on the part of vast numbers of people of all that makes life tolerable, from the point of view of comfort and enjoyment, and, on the basis of this renunciation, of an organized quest of union with God, which has never been surpassed for eagerness and courage. It was not, however, in this intensely ascetic form that the monastic movement was to make itself most widely known in Europe. The earliest monastic movements in the West

[1] *De Institutis Renunciantium*, eleven books, and *Collationes*, twenty-four books.

were indeed copied from the East. But it was St. Benedict's Rule (sixth century) which imprinted on Western monasticism its dominant character. This Rule became the chief basis on which, in the dissolution of society in the West under the invasion of the barbarians, religion alike and civilization maintained a certain standing ground from which reconstruction could proceed. Compared to what Fr. Cuthbert Butler calls "the competition in individual ascetism," of which the Egyptian and Syrian deserts were the scene, St. Benedict's Rule was moderate. "We are going to establish (he says in the prologue to his Rule) a school of God's service in which we hope we shall establish nothing harsh, nothing burdensome."[1] His monks were to constitute families of men under their father-abbot, wholly communistic in respect of possessions, living their whole lives out in their own monasteries, devoted solely to the worship and service of God on a basis of labour, strict frugality and whole-hearted obedience. The Rule is a very short book: but hardly any book has produced such rich fruit. What Europe owes to it cannot be exaggerated. In a wild world these peaceful monks, defenceless except for the religious awe which they inspired even among barbarous peoples, presented the really Christian ideal. Benedict's idea was not so much that of maintaining a special vocation, as that of maintaining the only true life for man according to the precepts and counsels of the

[1] See Cuthbert Butler's admirable *Benedictine Monachism*, iii.

Gospels. Only it was conceived that this true life could not be maintained but on a basis of celibacy. Therefore it left out of account the mass of married men and women, and it involved a serious depreciation of the whole function of sex, as at best closely allied to sin. Thus it was the average life of ordinary people, in a now nominally Christian world, that sank so low.

(2) The emphasis for the Christian society living in the world—here we are thinking chiefly of the East—passed from right living to right thinking, from conduct to orthodoxy. The rise of Arianism and the long world-wide conflicts which ensued on fundamental matters of Christian belief may be said to have made this inevitable. Nevertheless the change is lamentable. In the Christian literature of the first three centuries Christianity appears primarily as a life to be lived. In the literature of the East, under the pressure of theological strife, in spite of the efforts of such primarily ethical teachers as John Chrysostom, it becomes first of all a precise doctrine to be believed.

(3) Thirdly (still keeping to the East), it is evident that the fascination of being brought under the smile of the omnipotent Emperor was too much for the bishops. As a whole the Church showed no caution in accepting Imperial patronage. The protest, "What has an emperor to do with the Church," comes from a heretic[1]

[1] Perhaps Donatus himself, *Patr. Lat.* viii. 776—certainly the saying is Donatist.

and is very rarely heard. Not even the changes in the theological preferences of emperors seem to have given the Church the will and the courage to say: "You can persecute us or favour us: but you shall not take from us the liberty of spiritual self-government." The Church comes to appear only too like an instrument or department of the Empire. Even in respect of its marriage law, on which subject our Lord spoke so definitely and authoritatively, it made a fatal compromise from which it has never recovered itself. The maxim that religion is a voluntary matter—to be promoted only by peaceful persuasion—is forgotten. The emperors are appealed to without compunction to put down paganism: and, when they seek to impose unity on the Church in matters of orthodoxy, there is no general remonstrance raised against their using the methods of imprisonment and banishment.[1] Though the cultivation of the spiritual life and a certain independence of spirit still flourished in the monasteries, outside their walls the Church in the Eastern Empire allowed itself to become almost identified with the State. This identification is shown at its zenith in the time of Justinian. Later, when the age-long threat to the Empire from the remoter East took new and concrete

[1] See Duchesne's *Hist. Ancienne de L'Énglise*, ii. 17. "Devenu Crétien, l'Empereur voulu bientôt convertir aussi l'Empire, et non seulement le convertir, mais faire de la nouvelle religion ce qu'on n'avait pu faire de l'ancienne, une institution officielle et universellel une religion d'État . . . L'Église s'y resigna. On ne voit nule part qu'elle est soulevé des objections de principe."

form in the victorious hosts of Islam, and when the terrified Empire was standing on its defensive, the Church seems wholly to have abandoned the very idea of the conversion of the world by purely spiritual penetration. It saw its fairest provinces passing under the dominion of the False Prophet, and Christians reduced to a condition of ignominious slavery; and it abandoned itself almost unreservedly for protection to the Empire and to its methods of war and intrigue.

II

When we turn from the East to the West, which concerns us more nearly, we find, as has already been said, the same rapid lowering of the average standard of Christian morality as in the East, even before the incursions of the barbarians. We do not at first find the same absorption in theological problems as we find in the East, for the genius of the West was not disposed that way; but when the flood of barbarians from Germany occupied vast areas of the Western Empire in the fifth century and onward, it was an Arian flood overwhelming Catholic Orthodoxy —for Ostrogoths and Visigoths, Suevi, Vandals, Burgundians and Lombards were alike Arian. "It might have seemed probable at the end of the fifth century, on a calculation of forces, that the religion of Europe was destined to be Arian."[1]

[1] Dill, p. 24.

Thus the question of creed became the dominant question of the Church's life in the West also—it is the urgency of this question which finds its echo in what are called the "damnatory clauses" of the *Quicunque Vult*—and it was only the conversion of Clovis and the Franks to Catholic Christianity, and then their final victory over Goths and Burgundians, which saved the Church, under the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, for its great and providential task in Europe.

As to subservience to the Emperor, the Western Empire became the shadow of a shade in the fifth century, and it was only for a short period that Justinian's generals succeeded in the middle of the sixth century in reasserting the authority of the Eastern Empire over Italy. The worth and dignity of Rome, so far as it lived on, lived on in the successor of St. Peter. During the brief mastery of the East over the West, the popes no doubt, like their Eastern brethren, found the hand of the omnipotent Emperor heavy upon them. And Teutonic kings, such as Theodoric the Ostrogoth, could be no less masterful than Eastern emperors. It is a curious fact that the first of the very rare visits of a Roman pontiff to Constantinople was reluctantly undertaken by the Pope John at the compulsion of Theodoric (in general a tolerant ruler, but with a limit to his toleration) to insist that the churches at Rome which had been in possession of the Arians should be restored to

them by the Emperor Justin, and that certain forced conversions to Catholicism should be annulled. It appears that he was (most unwillingly and under protest) successful in the object of his mission so far as the restitution of the Roman churches to Arian worship was concerned, though for some reason which remains obscure he was thrown into prison by Theodoric, in his last fierce days, and died there.[1]

But whatever humiliations the Roman pontiff or the bishops in the West from time to time experienced at the hands of the secular powers, and however threatening the intrusions of later kings, like Charles the Great, into the spiritual functions of bishops, the dignity of the Church in the West, and of the successor of St. Peter at its head, presented a remarkable contrast to the abasement of the Church before the Imperial autocracy in the East, and especially at Constantinople. The famous words of Dante—that the Empire "per cedere al Pastor si fece Greco" ("to leave the Pastor room, went o'er to Greece") —broadly express the truth. And even before the Roman pontiff had succeeded in consolidating his sway over Western Europe, while Europe was still in the welter of conflicting races and tribes, the history of the Church presents a singularly impressive picture of mastery over savage surroundings, through the spiritual authority of its saints and bishops. The reign of the saints, which Daniel saw in vision, we some-

[1] Duchesne's *d'Église au VI^me Siècle*, pp. 74 ff.

times feel to have come, as we look out on the wild and disorderly scene; but it was purchased at an enormous sacrifice of what we must call the principles and methods of Jesus Christ.

III

What an appalling picture of Gaul, for instance, when it was overwhelmed by the Frankish hosts, is presented in the pages of Gregory of Tours, and reflected most recently for English readers in the pages of Dill's *Merovingian Age*. The leadership of the See of Rome is not yet effective—it is, in fact, hardly in evidence.[1] It is the Gallic bishops who are the *viri apostolici*, the figures who inspire religious awe both among kings and lords and among the common people and the soldiers. It must be remembered that Gaul was not a pagan country when the Franks came into possession. The bishops were already persons of great authority, and Christianity held the field. The religious awe and reverence, first inspired by St. Martin of Tours, towards the representatives of Church authority and of the Religious Life maintained itself and passed unimpaired from the Romanized Gauls to the Frankish invaders, whether still pagan or newly Christianized.

[1] Dill, p. 480; Duchesne, chap. xiii. There is only one recorded instance of an appeal to Rome, or action by Rome, during the years between Cæsarius of Arles and Gregory the Great, and this one instance was not a creditable action nor effective. Moreover, the papal vicariate established at Arles had failed to take effect.

And, though there were no doubt fearful scandals among bishops and religious, on the whole they deserved the respect they inspired. Nevertheless, while Franks and "Romans" were becoming merged into one people, after the bulk of the Franks had accepted the Catholic Faith, what an awful picture it is that passes under our eyes in the pages of Gregory's history! What a startling reversal we observe of the methods of Christ and of the Early Church![1]

(1) Here as elsewhere the "barbarians" had been, in Stanley's famous phrase, "baptized in platoons." However democratic the institutions of the Teutonic tribes may have been in their old homes, under the exigencies of becoming invading armies they had lost their democratic character and their kings had become autocrats.[2] Clovis, at his conversion, did not indeed force his people to follow him. Only about half appear, in fact, to have done so at first. But what conversion there was was obviously skin deep. It was presumably a recognition that in their new quarters Christ was a stronger God than those they left behind. But their characters were unchanged.

[1] See R. W. Church's *Beginning of the Middle Ages*—an admirable little book—p. 49: "The religious aspect of the West was to be, for many centuries, a dark and deplorable one. From the moment that the barbarians become masters in the West, an immediate deterioration becomes manifest in the clergy, in their teaching, in their standard of conduct. . . . Even from men like . . . Cæsarius of Arles (†542) the descent is great to the next generation . . . with their coarse and superficial religion, their readiness to allow sin to buy itself off by prodigal gifts, the connivance of the best men at imposture," etc.

[2] Dill, p. 118.

The pages of Gregory of Tours, a man himself of unblemished character and real nobility, present us with a horrible record of sensuality, bloodshed, perjury and violence in the upper classes, related with a matter-of-fact calmness, without any expression of surprise or horror. The Church with few exceptions appears to have acquiesced in these things as inevitable and made little protest. What glimpses we are given of the life of the peasantry suggests appalling sufferings under the constant devastation of the Merovingian armies, "and yet no stern moralist points the contrast between the dissolute luxury of the Court and the miseries of the common people."[1] Now and again, indeed, we hear of the passion of pity being evoked in the breasts of women of high rank by the overwhelming misery around them, so that, like Queen Radegund, they forsook their palaces for the cloister and sold all they had to minister to the poor. But such cases are rare. Moreover it is apparent that there has entered into the Christian religion, as high and low, clergy and laity, secular and religious, understand it, a tremendous admixture of pagan superstition.

The conversion of our countrymen, as Bede describes it, by the Roman and the Scotic missionaires presents a far brighter picture. But here again the declension of Saxon Christianity in the generations after Alfred appears to have been rapid, and the allusions Anselm makes to his experiences in England represent a condition

[1] Dill, pp. 256 and 298.

of things in which any moral discipline even for the gravest offences was well-nigh impossible.[1]

We ask ourselves in perplexity and amazement —can it have been the intention of the living Lord that the whole method of the Church should be so radically altered from His own method and that pursued by the Church of the early centuries? Was it according to the divine intention that the method of indiscriminate baptism and the consequent merging of the Church into the world should have been adopted, as was done apparently with little or no consideration? St. Gregory the Great had scruples about the compulsory conversion of the Jews, but none about the conversion of pagans by even the most violent measures. He approves, moreover, of bribing Jews into changing their religion by remission of rent, and he defends this procedure on the ground that even if these men come to Christ with little faith, the Church will gain their children.[2] The argument has been often used. But it must be confessed that the method of indiscriminate baptism, whether as practised in barbarous or in civilized times, reverses the fundamental method of Christ. The Church ceases altogether to be the sort of spiritual

[1] See Anselm, *Ep.*, lib. iii. 62, ad *Willelm Archidiac*, where he is excusing himself for the weakness of ecclesiastical discipline in England, and speaking in particular of the "peccatum Sodomicum"—"considerandum enim etiam est quia hectenus ita fait publicum hoc peccatum, at vix aliquis pro eo erubesceret; et ideo multi magnitudinem eius nescientes, in illud se praecipitabant."

[2] See Hobhouse's *The Church and the World*, p. 114.

aristocracy which could draw and convert the world outside by the spectacle of a life so different from its own. But we shall have to return to this perplexing subject directly.

(2) The same problem is presented by the total abandonment of that resolute refusal of force as an instrument for propagating religion, which the Early Church, when it itself was the subject of persecution, had professed so eagerly, and which assuredly represents the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. It is amazing how unhesitatingly and without shame the leaders of the Church, after the acceptance of Christianity as the State religion, began to demand that Imperial pressure should be used against the pagan religions. Towards heretics there was more hesitation in some quarters. St. Martin, in particular, stood out against it in Gaul and Ambrose in Italy, in the case of Priscillian. And St. Augustine was only converted to it from an earlier repugnance, partly apparently by his experience of successful force applied to the Donatists, but also by his unfortunate discovery of the text, "Compel them to come in." Never has the misapplication of a text—for it is really such—had more disastrous consequences. But it is not often observed that Priscillian himself (A.D. 380), who is commonly regarded as the person who first suffered death for heresy, was himself the first to demand that fate for certain heretics or semi-pagans.[1]

[1] Priscill. tract i. (Ed. Schepps), pp. 22–4, "gladio persequendus."

When Constantine identified himself with faith in the Christian God, it would appear that it was chiefly as "the God who giveth victory in the battle."[1] When two centuries later Clovis was converted because he, like Constantine, found the God whom his Christian wife worshipped able to give him victory, a bishop[2] who belonged to the Burgundian (Arian) Kingdom hailed him in the words: "Your faith is our triumph: every battle you fight is a victory for us." He hailed the Frankish King as henceforth the Catholic champion against Arianism, and accepted the method of warfare as an obvious and natural method for the propagation of the faith. Here we have already the spirit of the Crusaders. Where this spirit prevailed there was naturally no hesitation in accepting persecution and death by the civil sword as the method by which the faith was to be defended as well as propagated. There was no question about it. The relation of the Church to the Empire, or to the Kingdoms, was differently conceived at different epochs and by opposing parties: but from the beginning of the Middle Ages there was no doubt entertained that the Empire (or the State) existed to support the Church, and whether in propagating the faith or in the suppressing heresy the Church was to look to the State to use the sword on behalf of the kingdom of God.

[1] Hobhouse, p. 89.

[2] Avitus of Vienne.

IV

As has been said, it is a tremendous question whether these abandonments by the Church of the methods of Christ, after it had enthusiastically accepted "establishment," and either had become itself a function of the State or had succeeded in reducing the State to the condition of being a function of the sovereign church—it is a tremendous question whether these momentous changes in principle and policy were simply violations of the divine will—acts of unfaithfulness on the largest scale—or changes made under divine guidance to meet wholly new conditions. Certainly the new function to which the Church in the West was called of disciplining the Teutonic races, pagan and barbarous in spirit, may have seemed to call for new methods—may have seemed to demand recurrence from the religion of the New Testament to the preparatory discipline of the Old. The strange thing is how little attention seems to have been paid at the time to the magnitude of the change, and how little its fundamental nature seems to have come under consideration. We can indeed imagine the Church adopting a quite different policy—that is, confronting emperors and kings and, while gladly accepting toleration, persistently refusing to allow them to interfere in its spiritual concerns. Even at the cost of renewed persecution, we can imagine it proudly maintaining its ancient

discipline, keeping baptism or membership in the Church as a spiritual treasure only to be bought at a great price. We can imagine it refusing to allow the officers of State to interfere in the propagation or defence of religion. We can imagine, further, the Church enlarging the ancient catechumenate to fulfil the Old Testament function of a "schoolmaster to bring to Christ" the yet unbaptized hosts of the German tribes. But an imaginary picture of "how things might have happened" is of little value. The Church never appears to have contemplated the alternative. It undertook its task, which, as we see it in the West, was the task of controlling and training the new nations, by a method which involved a combination within its own body of the functions of the Old Testament with those of the New. The ideal of the New Testament was still presented, and effectively presented, in the monasteries at their best, and in the lives of innumerable saints, whose light still shone even in the darkest times; while at the same time "because of the hardness of men's hearts" the Church acquiesced in a quite different standard in the mass of its members, a standard which belongs to the Old Testament and not to the New; while even on that level its methods failed, even as the methods of the Old Covenant failed before the stubborn heart of Israel.

It is curious what astonishingly different estimates are presented to us in the literature of to-day of the Middle Ages and of the moral

and spiritual achievement of the Church. There is agreement as to the appalling character of the "dark ages" which ensued upon the collapse of the Empire: there is agreement as to the splendour of the intellectual, artistic, political and religious revival which is at its zenith in the thirteenth century. But as to whether on the whole Churchmen should feel pride or shame in face of the Church's mediæval record, whether on the whole the historian should attribute to the Church the glory of achievement or the ignominy of failure, there is an amazing difference of opinion. The fact is that the Middle Ages are ages of startling contrast—the dark very dark and the light very brilliant. We can form a fair estimate of this contrast; for we should notice that there was in these ages no effective censorship of literature apparent. There is no concealment by mediæval writers of the most hideous aspects of the life around them.[1] Could plain speaking, for instance, about the corruption of the Church go further than in the *Dialogo* of St. Catherine of Siena, where the horrible disclosure is put into the mouth of God the Father? The regrettable fact about our current literature is that one class of books, written with an obvious motive of propagating the Catholic faith, gives us the radiant picture, and other books, with an equally obvious motive of controversy, give us the gloomy picture, and one

[1] This general statement would require modification: see G. G. Coulton *Five Centuries of Religion*, vol. ii., cap. xviii.

that is fairly impartial is not easy to find nor indeed easy to paint. But however great the failures and scandals in the life of the mediæval Church—however gross its tolerated superstitions, however far it was from presenting to Jews within or to Mohammedans without the bounds of Christendom any such general vision of goodness as would have drawn them to Christ, however unchristian were its official methods of appeal and of discipline—it never incurred the ignominy of abandoning the idea of the Church as the representative of the kingdom of God and the lordship of Christ on earth. It never failed to present the kingdom of God as a visible society on earth in which every activity of man, every aspect of his individual and corporate life, was to be brought under the obedience of Christ. It never, in idea at least, suffered any district of life to fall outside its control, as if it could be carried on without reference to religion.

V

We have been thinking so far of the Church specially as it was in the Dark Ages which preceded the great Renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But our historians have recently restored to our imagination the sense of the glory of this Renaissance. The great representatives of the thought of the Church, the

Schoolmen and the Canonists, have recovered their proper thrones in intellectual estimation. We can only pay them proper homage if we pay heed to the grandeur of their conception of human society—a conception in which the ecclesiastical and the secular were only two aspects of the life of the one society, viewed always as a vast body of many members—not individuals, but classes—all bound to co-operate to the glory of God and to pursue by very various methods the eternal welfare of man.

The background of this conception lies in the divine justice or equity, which is of the essence of God Himself, and which, as reflected in the universal conscience of rational man, appears as the law of nature—a term and an idea which passed into the Church from the Roman stoics. According to this law of nature all men are equal, and to all belongs the equal right to participate in the gifts of Nature. The law of nature acknowledges no such right of private property as would enable one man to infringe the liberty of another to satisfy his needs from the bounty of God. But the sin of man—the ineradicable concupiscence which is the result of the Fall—has obscured the law written in the heart, and the positive laws of kings and states have reflected the law of nature very imperfectly or not at all. Hence the necessity of the Revealed Law of the Old and New Testaments which re-enacted the law of nature and finally developed it. This positive divine law

recognizes the right of private property as necessary to man's fallen state, as a curb upon covetousness and lawless power, but never such an absolute right as will obscure natural justice or man's essential liberty. It recognizes the legitimacy even of slavery, as being for the benefit of the slave in the world as it is; but it must be the sort of slavery which acknowledges the essential liberties of the man. There is thus always an appeal behind the tyranny of kings and laws and the necessary "conventions" of society to the law of natural justice and to the spiritual authority of the Revealed Law; and the Church exists on earth to guard the Revealed Law and thereby to restrain human law from violating divine justice.

On this basis we are presented with a wide-sweeping theory of Christian ethics on the double basis of the four (Stoic) cardinal virtues illuminated and corrected by the Christian theological virtues. The scholastic theory of Christain ethics is a magnificent positive structure, rooted in great principles and extending to all the departments of life. It sets limits to the right of property; it enforces the "just price" in buying and selling; it takes over from the Old Testament the prohibition of usury considered as an exploiting of the necessities of the poor by the more powerful neighbours. It "interferes" in everything which man does or claims to do. For is not the Law of Christ the foundation on which man's whole life, social and individual, is built?

That the mediæval authors did present a magnificent conception of human life as it ought to be in the kingdom of God would not be denied. That the idea it had of the function of the Church—whether it is ranked side by side with the State or regarded as supreme over the State—to keep the laws of the kingdom of God ever in men's mind, and to resist all the encroachments of human arrogance and concupiscence upon their dominion, was a noble idea no one could doubt, nor that the papacy, at its highest moments, gave magnificent expression to the idea which it represented. It is hardly possible to read history and not to see the paramount need there was at the beginning of the Middle Ages for the centralization of Church authority in the papacy. Nor ought we to allow it to be forgotten that the greatest of the popes, at the moment of the greatest dignity of the Church, would not suffer it to be forgotten that the Church has no ultimate authority except so far as it represents truly the infallible judgment of God: for "the judgment of the Church sometimes follows human opinion which often deceives and is deceived. Thus it happens from time to time that one who in God's sight is "bound" is by the Church "loosed": and one who is free in God's sight is by the judgment of the Church put in chains."[1] No one, once more, would doubt that the Church was an effective agency for implanting in feudalism, with its rigid distinction of orders always

[1] Carlyle's *Mediæval Polit. Theory*, ii. 248.

tending to become castes, the leaven of the Christian idea of the essential spiritual equality of all men; or that it did in some measure permeate the whole of industry with the fear of God, and even temper the ferocity of war. But in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it became evident that both the philosophy of the schools and the organization and moral authority of the Church were breaking down. This is evident in particular with regard to the attempt of the Church to regulate buying and selling and to prohibit usury. Its regulations had been devised when buying and selling was mainly a matter of local exchange between individuals of the products of their personal labour, and when usury was conceived of as a cruel imposition by an individual rich man upon his poor brother in his need. But the rise of large-scale industry, the expansion first eastward and then westward of the horizon of trade, the beginning of modern capitalism and the appearance in local markets of the quite supra-local financier, paralysed the activity of the guilds, made the application of the local rules regulating the "just price" impossible, and gave a quite new meaning to the claim for interest on borrowed capital. Feudalism again was essentially a system applicable to a society interested only in agriculture and war, and relevant only to the privileges and duties consequent upon these pursuits. When commerce, upon which schoolmen and the Church had always looked askance—as being rooted in concupiscence, and a "low" occupation

—appeared as a world-wide institution standing on its own independent ground and becoming of chief importance in human society, feudalism had no place for it. Moreover, the structure of mediæval society had been based upon a conception of the nations of men as belonging not only to one Church but also to one Empire—the rising kingdoms being somehow satellites of the Empire. But it was apparent already in the fourteenth century that there was no longer an effective Empire, but only a rivalry of equal kings. So the social structure of the Middle Ages is seen to be giving way and with it the grandiose attempt of the Church to regulate all human life in the interest of humanity and justice. And no real attempt was made to meet the new situation with a new adjustment of the Church to the world either in the region of intellect or of organization—either in theory or in practice. The philosophy of the Church was a static philosophy, and its spiritual energy had gone out of it. The mind of the thinking portion of the Church is concentrating itself on practical problems of Church reform—though for the most part in vain. It is the end of an age that we see, and the dawning of a new one.[1]

[1] Books which should be consulted for the subject-matter of this chapter are especially:—

W. Hobhouse's *The Church and the World in Idea and History* (Macmillan)—Bampton lectures which were never sufficiently appreciated.

A. Robertson's *Regnum Dei* (Methuen)—again Bampton lectures of great value.

[*Footnote continued over.*

A. L. Smith's *Church and State in the Middle Ages* (Oxford Press) —indispensable.

Samuel Dill's *Roman Society in Gaul in the Merovingian Age* (Macmillan).

Duchesne's *L'Église au VI^me Siècle* (Paris. Bocard).

Troeltsch's *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (Gesammelte Shriften I. Tubingen). Most unfortunately not translated into English. Baron F. von Hugel, in his *Lectures and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion* (1921), pp. 170 ff, gives us the best account of Troeltsch's thought.

Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*. Cap. I.

LECTURE V

THE RENAISSANCE, THE REFORMATION AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

HITHERTO we have been contemplating organized and continuous efforts on the part of the Church of Christ to claim for its Master the whole life of the redeemed humanity, social no less than individual, and thus to represent effectively the kingdom of God on earth. The first effort was made while Christianity was a struggling and persecuted sect in the Roman Empire—separated by a wide gulf from the society of which it nevertheless formed a part, but gradually winning its way by the public witness of its corporate life. The effort was successful in the sense that society at large and the emperor at its head were forced at last to acknowledge the Christian God as the true God, and the Christian life as the true life for man—"having promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come."

In the next period we see the Church seated by the thrones of kings, or claiming a higher throne than theirs, and finally boldly striving to organize a united Christendom as the kingdom of God and of His Christ—a universal empire which should be also a universal Church; though at

the very outset we find it, in the attempt to fulfil this mighty enterprise, forced to discard some principles which had seemed to be foundation stones of its earlier life—the principle of the essential voluntariness of matters of belief, and of peaceful persuasion as the only method of religious propaganda, and the principle of a vigorous testing of individual character as a condition of admission to the Christian Church. In effect we seem to witness the Church attempting to combine the functions of the Old Covenant with those of the New.

The first of these periods passed into the second by a process of almost unconscious development under the pressure of circumstances. The change of method involved was indeed momentous and raises in our minds profound questions. But the success attained in the second period, no less than in the first, was conspicuous and impressive. In the Middle Ages the idea of the kingdom of God, the idea of a united Christendom in which the whole life of mankind is under the sovereignty of the Lord Christ not only becomes dominant as an idea, but also is realized, with whatever glaring imperfections, under our eyes. But our present task is very different. It is to advance into the world of modern Europe—the world of the modern separate kingdoms each claiming unrestricted sovereignty—the world of the intellectual Renaissance and of the rise and expansion of the natural sciences—the world of the so-called Industrial Revolution and of the

beginnings of democracy: and though from many points of view it is a glorious epoch and an epoch of conspicuous advance for humanity, it is from our special point of view a period of collapse and failure.

I

(1) For, first, the great conception of the one Christian society—at once a Catholic State and a Catholic Church—a holy empire and a papal monarchy—manifestly breaks down. The separation of the Eastern and Western Churches: the subjection of a great part of South-Eastern Europe to Ottoman domination: the rise of Orthodox Russia: the development of the European Kingdoms in such wise that the so-called Holy Roman Empire became simply one among many states without a shadow of authority over the others: the papacy, by a fatal legacy becoming one state among others, forced in self-protection to enter into entangling and enslaving alliances: the public scandals in the life and government of the Church, alienating the allegiance of the better minds of Europe: the revolt of the Reformation and the resulting formation of separate national churches—these things taken together meant the vanishing away of the grandiose ideal of one organized Christian authority over men and nations from the world of practical politics. It meant the emancipation

from all super-national control of the nominally Christian kingdoms: indeed more than that—it meant the emancipation of politics altogether from any Christian control of a visible kind. The way was free for the influence of Machiavelli. Henceforth the question can be asked: "What has religion to do with politics?"

(2) The idea of a Church having authoritative control over the minds and ideas of men received a shattering blow. Nothing is more noticeable in the transition period from the Roman Empire to Modern Europe, or what is called the Middle Ages, than the extraordinary authority of single individuals over the whole mind of Europe—of such men as Augustine or Gregory the Great, or, later, of Thomas Aquinas. A single individual dominates a whole epoch. His word is law. But this is so because he is the accepted representative of the unquestioned authority of the Catholic Church. But the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, beginning in Italy and spreading over Europe, made an immense difference. Its leaders know that they are in revolt from the immediate past. Even men like Colet and Erasmus depreciate and ridicule the great schoolmen, because they are in revolt against their whole method. The claim of free thought, free criticism, free science is in the air. Henceforth leaders of thought such as Descartes, or Spinoza, or Leibnitz may hold a great place in the thought of mankind, but as leaders rather than authorities. Everything

is open to question. Criticism is vigorous and destructive. The whole terrible series of forgeries, in reliance upon which the papal authority had been built up and sustained, enabling it to proclaim the monarchy of the Holy See as a doctrine already acknowledged in the ancient Church, is exposed before the eyes of Europe: Church history begins to be rewritten and Biblical criticism starts on its career: science begins to overturn the established and traditional ideas of the structure and history of the universe; and the condemnation of Galileo by the ecclesiastical authority, on the ground that his discovery contradicted the Bible and his view therefore must be erroneous, sets the whole world of science in instinctive and passionate antagonism to the Church. The new spirit affirms that before all things inquiry must be free.

(3) But what is from our present point of view the most important feature of the Renaissance is the emancipation of commerce and industry from the control of religion. So long as industry meant mainly agriculture and local crafts, ministering to the simplest needs of men, local guilds and public opinion could, between them, roughly settle the "just price" and local authority could enforce it. But when large-scale commerce began—when the goods in question might come from the remote and unknown east or west or south—who could fix the just price? And what authority could control this new and already international power of

Commerce and Finance, which was already able to claim for its captains an importance as great as that of kings or barons or civic mayors? Again, the old prophets of Israel had seen in usury only a form of oppression of the poor man in his need by rich creditors. Thus they had denounced it and the Church had taken over their denunciation as a regular weapon of her armoury. But, with the rise of large-scale business and the demand for capital, "credit" and "interest" were becoming wholly new things. It was no longer a wealthy magnate making a cruel use of the necessities of a poor neighbour: it was a well-to-do man seeking a use for his surplus wealth by sharing in a great commercial enterprise; and the lender was at the mercy of the borrower at least as much as the borrower of the lender. Both stood to win or lose together. The efforts of the canonists to accommodate and adapt the old ecclesiastical condemnations of usury to the new conditions of industry were pathetic. But there was no man great enough seriously to attempt a task such as an Aquinas had in real measure been able to accomplish with a grand intellectual power in the earlier Renaissance—the task of adjusting an old tradition to the yet strange lights of a new age. In the later Renaissance no real attempt was made at a new Ethics of Commerce. The old ethical doctrines and laws were reiterated in vain, and gradually fell into desuetude as obviously antiquated and inadequate to the new situation.

The novelty of the situation, the rapid shifting of the scene at least in the more progressive regions of the earth, and the immensity of the change introduced into commerce by the opening of the ways from the East and from the West would in any case have made a reapplication of the old ethical principles to the new ways of business men, alive with the passion for wealth and yet more wealth, very difficult if not impossible. But in fact the attention of Churchmen and theologians was turned in a quite different direction. The corruption of the papal system, and the question of the authority of the reforming councils against the authority of popes, and then the even more clamorous questions raised by the revolt of the Reformers —the denunciation of the papacy and all its works on the one side and, on the other, the efforts of the Church of Rome at once to defend itself and to reform itself—these urgent movements and questions entirely occupied the minds of the theologians, and neither a new Christian philosophy nor a new Christian sociology showed any signs of developing itself on any considerable scale.[1]

The idea that it was Protestantism with its accompanying individualism which broke down the old Catholic sociology—so that the moral chaos of modern industrialism is the fault of the Reformation—will not bear the testing of historical

[1] I suppose the greatest of the efforts made on the side of the Catholic Church was the effort of the great Jesuit, Suarez.

fact. Mr. Tawney's admirable work *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* must be allowed to have spoken a final word for us in England on this subject. It is a grave and just charge against post-Reformation religion as a whole that it allowed itself to become individualistic and therewith falsely other-worldly—that it allowed itself to appear as simply a system of doctrines and sacraments by which the individual could be redeemed from the corruption of this world and prepared for a blessed eternity in another. But this grave and just charge must be made as much against the theology of the Counter-Reformation as against that of the Reformation in its several currents. Of this there can be no question. In the Catholic system—which, of course, laid immense stress on the Sacraments—baptism, confirmation, penance, the eucharist, were to a lamentable extent represented as institutions purely for the salvation of the individual soul, involving chiefly individual obligations to God, instead of being presented, as they are in the New Testament and in the Early Church, as social ceremonies, ceremonies of the divine society, involving social obligations—the obligations of brotherhood—at least as markedly as those of private morality.

Let us distinguish a true from a false other-worldliness. The Gospels and the New Testament generally are full of other-worldliness. This world order is not the goal nor the end: nor can we rely on progress being maintained in

this world. But history has a goal. One day God is to come into His own. One day Christ is visibly to reign in all the universe. One day we are to see the City of God; and the Church of here and now, which is the vestibule of the kingdom of God, will pass into the kingdom realized in its perfection. Meanwhile the wise man will keep his eyes fixed on the eternal issues. He will lay up "treasure in heaven." But "heaven" is not the realization of a merely individual union with God. Heaven is the perfected fellowship. It is the City of God. The Christian is a member of that city already—that is, of the Church. His probation lies in his proving himself a good member of the body—that is in fellowship. So the Christian ethics are social ethics through and through, and the social requirements guard the entrance to the final Kingdom—for did not Christ say: "Inasmuch as ye did not" your brotherly duty "to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me—depart ye cursed"? Thus the true Christian ethics is at once other-worldly and this-worldly. The Church is building a fabric which only eternity can complete. So it is other-worldly. But meanwhile the task of the Christian Church is to build the fabric of the true humanity, so far as that is possible, in this world. The materials for the future City of God are to be fashioned here. The urgent question for Christians should be —Are we *now*, in all our different countries and different congregations, living the life of fellow-

ship which is the life of heaven? Does the religion of fellowship permeate all the relations of man to man? Are we certainly living as those who believe that every man counts for one in God's sight, and no one for more than one?

Now it is impossible to deny that the Church of these latter days has been disastrously individualistic in its outlook, and its casuistry. It has been "other-worldly" in the false sense. But this appears to be as much the case with the religion of the Counter-Reformation as with the religion of the Reformation in its various streams. It is true that Protestantism, the revolt against the authority of Rome, appealed to the more advanced peoples—those in which individualism was most developed. Thus in the seventeenth century the nations which were the pioneers in industry had become the Protestant nations. And in England it was the religion of the Puritans which appealed mostly to the trading middle class. And in course of time the Reformed religions, as being the religions of the leading commercial peoples and classes, found a way of providing religious sanctions for economic selfishness, and of consecrating the love of money in the guise of the pursuit of one's vocation and prudence and thrift. But this was in the eighteenth or the later seventeenth century. The leaders of the Reformation in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had not the least intention of letting the life of industry and the relations of buyer and seller escape from the control of

religion. The attitude of Luther towards commerce was indeed different from the attitude of Calvin. Luther was more conservative; Calvin was more enlightened and reckoned more fully with the new conditions. Luther assigned the function of moral control to the State rather than the Church, while Calvin would still have the Church the mistress. But alike the Reformers on the Continent and the Reformers in England maintained the old attitude of the schoolmen and canonists, and reiterated the old formulas, claiming the subjection of industry to religion, long after they had ceased to exercise any real influence on industrial conduct. What finally silenced the old sociology of the Church was not Protestantism, but the fact that it had lost the authority and the grasp necessary for its application to new conditions.

In England especially the new industrialism, wholly emancipated from religion, found its basis in a positively anti-Christian philosophy, which came to be identified with Jeremy Bentham. It is nothing but the truth to describe this as in principle the philosophy of selfishness. The only ultimate motive in man is declared to be the pursuit of his own happiness or interest—in short, the acquisitive instinct, which the New Testament describes and condemns as "pleonexia," the desire for more and more without limit. It is admitted that this motive in its unenlightened form may, and assuredly will, work havoc and destruction for society, and so also for the

individual. It is therefore for the interest of all that it should become restrained and enlightened. But an enlightened self-interest, equipped by science, is the only motive to which we can legitimately appeal, and only from the free competition of individually interested parties is the progress of human enterprise to be looked for. It is the business therefore of the State to liberate the individual as far as possible from all shackles, to leave men free to compete, to facilitate their scientific instruction, and to expect the greatest happiness of the greatest number, or (in other words) the welfare of society, to emerge from the free competition of individuals, whose only fundamental motive is acquisitiveness or self-interest. This philosophy has now become discredited and the political economy based upon it: but its influence was immense. It sanctioned the conception of "the economic man," motived only by the desire to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market, as the real ideal of "the man of business." It justified the maxim "business is business," and claimed that no consideration of any but the single motive of gain is in place there. It warned religion off the field. And the ignominy of the Church—an ignominy in which all the larger portions of a divided Christendom share equally, as far as we can ascertain, through the eighteenth and a great part of the nineteenth century—is that it acquiesced in this flatly anti-Christian philosophy and sociology. Confronted with the evidences of

the cruelty of industry to the weak and the defenceless, the Church maintained on the whole a miserable silence, and sank to a lower depth still when, instead of showing itself the vindicator of the poor and the oppressed like the prophets of old, or its Master Himself, or Hugh Latimer in the sixteenth century, or the Quaker Bellers in the seventeenth, it had the meanness to exhort the crushed and degraded poor to remember the blessings of their poverty and their freedom from the snares and temptations of wealth.

We should not depreciate the activities of the Church, which never ceased in the worst time, in the corporal works of mercy; nor, though the motive of personal merit acquired or of heavenly reward won by acts of charity was excessively prominent, is it just to ignore the self-sacrificing pity which was always evident among sincere Christians, nor the effect in softening human relationships which such self-sacrifice always has: nevertheless it must be confessed that the pity was not of the sort which has power in it really to remedy the misery which it deplores. The Church was lamentably content to go about with an ambulance cart, and a signally ineffective ambulance cart, when it ought, as well, to have been thundering like the old prophets, or like St. James, at the strongholds of tyranny and injustice which were so many, and in our country bringing its influence to bear through its bishops in the House of Lords, its parson-magistrates and its influential laity on the conscience of the

country—whereas in fact its guilty silence is almost unbroken.

It must be remembered that though religion can no doubt consecrate science and can justly demand its dedication to the glory of God, yet the self-revelation of God on which Christianity is based concerns only the conduct of human life in the relations of man to God and man to his fellow-man. Only in that region has the Church authority. It has no authority at all to lay a restraining hand on the free pursuit of the truth of things by the scientific or historical inquirer. On the other hand it does exist in order to regulate human life in accordance with God. It is therefore quite impossible for it to stand outside politics and economics, as if it had no concern in these fields. So far indeed as politics and economics are special sciences, it can claim no expert knowledge. But politics and economics deal with living men and women and children, and with all the human relationships. These human relationships may be organized in accordance with the principles of Christ or in flat contravention of them. Where the Church is a missionary body in a hostile or indifferent society, it may indeed appeal to the "natural law" of justice on behalf of the ill-used; but on the whole, like the Early Church, it must be content to exhibit within its own society the true principles of human life and to win its cause by the attractiveness of the spectacle. But where Christianity is at least in nominal possession, where the Church is

"established" to be the keeper of the national conscience, or where at least the nation as a whole owns allegiance to Christ, there the Church is bound to insist in season and out of season—that is, whether it is likely to receive a respectful hearing or no—that the relations of individual men and the relations of classes, of races, of nations, shall be controlled in accordance with those fundamental principles, to neglect which is really to repudiate altogether the name and authority of Christ.

II

"While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." Certainly men slept—that is, the Church of Christ, the appointed guardian of the moral interests of humanity, God's fruitful field, slept a long sleep, and certainly the enemy sowed an abundant crop of tares. So long as our histories were content to be the record of the doings of kings and politicians and warriors, what was most important and significant in the history of the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries escaped attention. It was not, in the main, historians but practical reformers, like Lord Shaftesbury, or novelists, like Charles Dickens, who were effective in calling the attention of man in general to its forgotten aspects. But since their time history has awakened to a truer sense of its vocation and

men of wide and accurate knowledge have told us the true story of our industrial life.[1] Moreover, in the wider field of the world, the experiences of the Great War, and the illuminating reflections which it opened out to the mind of the common man, have awakened the conscience and intellect of mankind, and taught them to take a new view of the relation of nations and of the traditional European diplomacy which has had war for its inevitable fruit. Further, the bare-faced exploitation of the weaker races in Asia and Africa and America and Australasia and the islands of the sea by the more powerful industrial and imperial powers has been laid bare, for those at least who wish to see; while the uprising of Asiatic and African peoples to claim their human rights is disclosing to Europe and America the fruits of the misuse of their power in the past, and compelling them to undertake a deep reconsideration of their principles and their policy.

I cannot within the limits of these lectures attempt even to sketch the gradual process, which is known by the misleading title of the Industrial Revolution: and there is the less reason to make the attempt as the work has been fully and accurately done in books already referred to. Thus I pass over the period of two hundred years, during the greater part of which

[1] I would refer especially to the series of works by Mr. and Mrs. J. L. le B. Hammond: *The Village Labourer*, *The Town Labourer*, *The Skilled Labourer*, *Lord Shaftesbury*, as well as to Mr. Tawney's work already referred to.

industry and politics were based upon a false philosophy and the established religion was content to have it believed that she had no voice in the directing of man's social and economic life.

From our present point of view I have described this period as a period of collapse and failure, because the Church was content to abdicate from the function of applying the principles of brotherhood to the relation of men and nations, and to witness without remonstrance the establishment of the quite alien principle of selfish competition as dominant in these great fields of human activity. Of course, from other points of view the period would justly be quite differently characterized. Also it must be recognized that within the region of the economic and political life of the nation the last ninety years—since the beginning of the Chartist Movement—have been years of an advance towards democracy, which, as far as the political vote is concerned, has been completely victorious, and in other respects also has led to conspicuous results. The improvement in general education has been enormous, as also in public sanitation. Our "working" population is much better fed, better clothed, and, on the whole, better housed. They have more leisure, more holidays, more pleasure. Moreover, the attitude of the literary world and the religious world towards industrial and social questions has greatly changed for the better. It may be asked—Why not be content with the gradual improvement and trust in its

continuance? The answer is, Because in spite of all these improvements Great Britain to-day is full of discontent. The hostility of classes is acute. Some formidable evils, threatening the very roots of society, are continually being aggravated; and the capitalistic organization of society, though it rests on a discredited theory of human life and is threatened with collapse, still in fact dominates the situation. It should also be borne in mind that it is not when things are at their worst that successful revolutions occur, but when the condition of the mass of men is improving; and if we desire to make violent revolution impossible, a relatively favourable situation is the proper background for hopeful reconstruction. So it is that I propose to return at once to the Fundamental Propositions with which I started, and, without undue pessimism, to analyse the causes of "the present discontent," and to endeavour to ascertain, for my own sake and the sake of those whom I can reach, how the Christian Church can again set itself to work to recover lost ground and fulfil once more its spiritual function in society.

III

My first proposition was *that the present condition of our society, our industry, and our international relations, in spite of not a few reassuring*

features, ought to inspire in our minds a deep sense of dissatisfaction and alarm, and a demand for reform so thorough as to amount to a revolution, though one which the teaching of experience and the teaching of Christ would alike lead us to believe can only be brought about by peaceful and gradual means.

The democratic movement which has characterized recent history nearly all over the world has reawakened a sense of justice in the hearts of men—that is, the demand for fair treatment, or something like equality of opportunity to make the best of themselves, for all citizens of whatever country. Perhaps the fundamental idea of democracy cannot be better described than in Walt Whitman's eloquent essay which he called *Democratic Vistas*. The essential meaning of democracy he found to lie in the refusal to recognize a privileged class, whose position can be maintained only by the enslavement or exploitation of others. "The average man of a land at last only is important."[1] In this sense democracy is "the leveller." But if it were nothing but this, democracy would prove to be a "levelling down" rather than a levelling up of humanity. The equalizing process needs to be counterbalanced by the development in all its infinite variety of the strength of personality. And the ultimate test of any democracy is to be found in the demand that in its organization of human society it shall so truly grant equality of opportunity to all who

[1] *Democratic Vistas*, p. 35; cf. p. 40.

are born into its citizenship as to encourage and enable them freely to develop the fullest richness of personality of which they are capable, or, more briefly, to make the best of themselves.

That is a good description of the ideal of democracy which floats before the mind of modern man: and, though the assurance given us that the Great War was "a war to make the world safe for democracy" has proved singularly false, and democracy since the Armistice has had many falls, yet even an autocracy to-day, in any fairly developed modern nation, which was found to be acting so as to conflict with this fundamental demand for justice would probably have a short life. Granted then, for England at any rate, the dominance of this sort of ideal of justice, the cause of our dissatisfaction with the present condition of our society is that, not only does it conspicuously fail to supply this fair opportunity for all its members to make the best of themselves, but that it appears in certain respects even to be emphasizing inequality more and more.

In justification of such a suspicion, we must briefly refer (1) to our industry, (2) to our education, and (3) to our law: and we must then look abroad and consider (4) our international relations and (5) the colour question—in each case, of course, only attempting to summarize results witnessed to by the best authorities we can find to rely upon.

(1) *Our industry.*—It is not only that the contrasts between luxurious and idle wealth

and ignominious poverty at the extremes of society are as startling as ever, but also, and much more, that that on which the wholesome and peaceful life of a community depends—the sense of security in employment and a confident expectation of a just return for work done—is conspicuously lacking for the great mass of our workers. In former times the sense of security depended, so far as it existed, in the confidence the workers felt in the good will of the individual masters. Now, though the phrase "I am determined to be master in my own business" is still heard, it has less and less true meaning. There is in most businesses no individual who is master. There are a number of workers with hand and with brain and there are managers: but the *owners* are for the most part unknown shareholders and large-scale financiers, very often themselves without any knowledge of the industry or interest in it, save as a means of profitable employment of capital. This is such an unnatural and unjust condition of things that it cannot be expected to last. Industry is, or ought to be, a social service, and also a personal vocation. If men are to work in it with any degree of satisfaction, they must be able to feel that, throughout the different grades of labour, though in varying degrees, the workers have a real understanding of the conditions of the industry, and a real share in the management of the concern in which they are all engaged; and that to them, in due proportion, will belong the profits of their industry, after all

necessary reserves are made and expenses paid, including the expenses of the minimum salaries or wages, and the fixed payments for borrowed capital. Only on some such principle of industrial management as this can it ever seem to the worker that he is—not a tool of financial schemes in which he has no real part or interest, but a partner in social service for his own good and that of society as a whole. I dare to say that the hope of industrial peace and progress depends more than anything else on some such reorganization of industry as shall give to every worker a reasonable sense of security in response to faithful service, and (above all) shall make it worth his while to do his best work. It is only by a radical readjustment that there appears to be a prospect of these fundamental conditions being fulfilled.[1]

It is to be observed that the further the mechanization of industry reduces the labourer to the position of an animated tool—"making money and unmaking man"—the greater is the necessity that his personal interest in the industry, and his sense of fellowship in a form of social service, should be stimulated.[2]

[1] In an Appended Note A, at the end of the volume, I have called attention to a scheme for the reformation of industrial companies, designed and legalized in New Zealand, which seems to demand more attention than, on the occasion of a recent visit of its promoters, it won in England.

[2] In *The Times* of March 9, 1928, ominous signs are noted in American industries. "The machine seems to have been dangerously ahead of man." "In large stretches of industries labour has become merely automatic machine tending." This is equally, even if in a larger degree, the case in all countries, and the tendency is in the American direction. "Rationalization of industry" is a curious

Long ago Rousseau, in his *Contrat Social*, made the profoundly true observation that real democracy is only possible where the era of self-government is a small one. Writers on democracy and political partisans of democracy have constantly ignored this remark, which remains fundamentally true, but is not really irreconcilable with the existence of large nations democratically governed. The reconciliation lies in regarding the State as an Association of Associations.[1] The individual's interest should be primarily attracted to things of his own immediate concern—his village—his city or district of a city—his industry. These departments of the common life would each have its own government, authoritative and relatively free. Thus in the government of each industrial enterprise, when every worker from the highest to the lowest, whether he work by hand or brain, had received such proportionate representation as would secure him from exploitation, we should look forward to the local Industrial Council taking the place of the Trade Union in the political education of the worker, and the Council of the particular industry would lead up to the more general industrial parliament. Such graduated councils, applicable equally to all the departments of the nation's life, would be

word to choose for the description of this process. The further it goes, the greater becomes the necessity for supplying the worker with an interest in the industry he is engaged in, in general, beyond his own special work, as also the necessity for teaching the average man the large and profitable uses of "leisure."

[1] For this whole subject I would refer to Dr. W. Temple's Scott Holland Memorial Lectures, *Christianity and the State*. Lecture III.

recognized elements in the government of the State, and each would wield authority in its own sphere, though all would be limited finally by the central authority representing the interests of the whole nation. Thus industry would become a self-governing function of the whole society, in which, at all its stages, the interest of the industry itself considered as a function of society, and the interest of each grade of workers by hand or brain would predominate, while the owners of capital would be represented also and their fixed return secured. It is only by granting a large measure of self-government to the smaller units of society and linking them up grade by grade with the central government that national democracy on a large scale can be made a reality; but here we are only concerned with its application to industry.

What has been said has been said of necessity all too briefly. Its very brevity will cause resentment in the advocates of the existing system of capitalism. But what they have to be asked to consider is that the tendency of the existing system towards the concentration of power in the hands of small circles of enormously rich men is not compatible with any real democracy and is likely to work its own destruction. What has to be considered is how our industry can be peacefully reorganized so as really to make it worth while for each individual workman to do his best: or to put it otherwise, how it can be reorganized so as really to embody the funda-

mental claim for an equal justice for all citizens, which is the soul of democracy.

(2) *Education.*—Our present system of education is notoriously and lamentably wasteful: because it ends too soon and too abruptly: and because it needs to be divided into primary and post-primary stages so as to prevent the last years of schooling becoming a loss of time. Its wastefulness is shown especially in the lamentable deterioration which is noticeable in our youth between the age of fourteen and eighteen, and the lamentably small proportion of what they learn at school which is retained or becomes ultimately fruitful. Those of us who had a prolonged education can judge where we should stand to-day if our education had ceased at the age of fourteen: nor can anyone contemplate the opportunities of education enjoyed on the one hand by "the workers" and those on the other hand enjoyed by the middle and wealthier classes without recognizing that our present system altogether fails to represent a fair opportunity for each child born into our citizenship to make the best of himself or herself.[1]

(3) *Our law.*—Inheriting as we do the results of the *laissez-faire* system, and the theory of government which almost restricted it to the

[1] For the justification of this paragraph I would refer to the *Report of the Consultation Committee on the Education of the Adolescent* (1927), which everyone should read. As an Appended Note B, p. 183, I print the appeal on its behalf of the Council of Church Ministers on Social Questions. For the reorganization of education as a part of the whole national administration, I would refer again to Dr. Temple's book, pp. 135 ff.

maintenance of life and individual property, we inherit with it a legal system and tradition which notoriously has been much more concerned to protect the supposed right of the "propertied classes" than that of the general public. Nowhere has this become more apparent than in that vitally important matter of the housing of our citizens in the country as well as in the towns. In this region the whole history of the law of property represents a triumph of the (presumed) interest of the individual over the welfare of the community as a whole and the poor in particular; and from the point of view to which I am striving to give expression, it is obvious that this misdirection of our law requires profound and extensive correction.

From any democratic point of view the aim of the State in legislature must be as far as possible to secure the reality of private property to all citizens, though no doubt in varying degrees. As against any thorough-going form of Socialism or Communism I desire to insist that the maintenance of the family (which should always be regarded as the root and centre of the organization of human society), as well as the encouragement of individuality demands the maintenance of private property; but that its maintenance should not be unregardful of greater interests. Thus the welfare of the community should always be held of more importance than the interest of the individual, and the object of legislation should always be to endow the largest number

of individuals with property and the sense of property. It is in both these respects that our laws have so signally failed. Their tendency throughout history has been to create a propertied class and make it dominant over an unpropertied nation. It is certain, if anything that can be called democracy or freedom is to prevail, that this tendency has to be deliberately and systematically reversed. Nothing seems to me at this moment more alarming than the concentration of capital, and the vast power which capital gives, in a few hands. For instance, in the department of journalism, so important for the life of any nation, it appears already to have almost destroyed the freedom of the press.[1]

I am conscious that in the whole of this argument I am "up against" a protest which is much more widespread than its occasional expression on public occasions would suggest. The protest is based on the assumption that, whereas all these and the like suggested reforms are "socialistic," and tend to undermine the possibility of acquiring and maintaining large fortunes, absolutely at the control of individual owners, to put them into force would destroy the motive which is probably the greatest motive in industry —the desire to become a very rich man, wielding

[1] For the substance of this paragraph see *Property: its Duties and Rights* (Macmillan)—a composite volume—also Dr. Temple again, p. 97. The lectures contained in this latter volume were delivered after those contained in this volume. At points I have modified my lectures after reading his: but on the whole I am able to refer to them for confirmation.

the power which riches can always claim, and having the right to hand on down the succession of generations both the acquired wealth and its advantages, including the advantage of being able to exercise a large liberality in public undertakings.

There are many things to be said in criticism of such an ideal. It is certainly in the deepest sense opposed to the teaching of Christ. But I am content to maintain silence in face of it for the moment, and only to resist one inference—the inference that the amount of energy, enterprise and intelligence available in industry would be lessened if the prospect of making great fortunes were reduced. I dare to prophesy that if the workers in all our industies were enabled to feel that they were really in a position in which it would pay them to do their best, and that thoughtfulness, intelligence and energy on their part would be expended on an enterprise which they could feel to be their own, the whole volume of energy liberated by this consciousness would enormously exceed what would be lost by the reduction of the opportunity for very few men to make vast fortunes. Also it seems contrary to experience to suppose that, if a man feels that it is on the whole worth his while to do his best, the energy he exhibits will depend on a precise calculation of how much financial profit he will obtain. The profound element of weakness in our present industry is that the industrial workers in general do not feel that their

occupation can claim the best that they can give. To remedy this it will be enough that each worker should feel that the interest of the business is his own interest.[1]

The drift of what has been said is this: that what is really of most importance for the remedying of inveterate social evils is the deepening and development of the sense of justice—that is, the demand that social arrangements should be so remoulded and redirected as that every one born into citizenship should have a fair chance of making the best of himself: and that our present industrial and educational and legal arrangements contradict manifestly and on a wide scale this demand of justice—that they have been fashioned by the false philosophy which made the acquisition of material wealth the end of industry instead of the good of the industrial society, and thereby have ministered to the satisfaction of a small propertied class to the detriment and dissatisfaction of the great majority. The privileged classes for the most part—in terror at the prospect of a socialist or communist revolution—appear to have hardened themselves into a blind adherence to their privileges and the refusal of demands involving any fundamental reform: and the "disinherited" classes to have lapsed into a

[1] As to the charge of "socialism," I do not know whether I am open to it. It has a specific definition which would certainly leave me outside it. Only I agree with a much-honoured worker, preacher and writer of the last generation—Canon Barnett—that we have a great way to go "towards socialism," even though, in any strict definition of the term, we should stop short some way before we get there.

permanent condition of discontent—sometimes savage, sometimes sullen, but more often cynical. The state of the country certainly does not at all suggest the probability of an approaching revolution. The reason for this opinion is in part that "the workers" appear in the mass to be amazingly good-tempered, and to be much more deeply interested in "sport" than in more serious business; and in part that they are by no means sufficiently disposed to trust their leaders. The conditions of revolution are therefore not present over any wide area. But we do look like a country which, by ignoring the real root of the disorder under which it is suffering, is advancing towards a paralysis of its best industrial and social energies, owing to constant squabbling and consequent inefficiency; and throughout all classes it would appear that we are trying to find an escape from dissatisfaction and the fear of what the future may bring forth in the pursuit of pleasures, harmless or otherwise, but at any rate calculated to absorb the attention which is needed from the citizen body as a whole for the great effort of reconstruction.

(4) Nor can the prospect be said to be more cheerful if we look away from the relation of classes to the relation of nations to one another. The Great War was to be a war to make the world safe for democracy: and it has proved quite otherwise. It was to be also a war to end war; and yet we are yearly commemorating an armistice which ended in terms of peace which seem in

fact designed to foster war—which drew new national boundaries in a spirit of reprisal, so that the allied nations who were the conquerors were allowed to absorb great numbers of hostile minorities, and the humiliated enemy was forced to disarm, only (it was alleged) as a prelude to a general disarmament which is still as far off as ever. The Governments are impressed with the dangers of disarmament and, it would seem, blind to the infinitely greater dangers of maintaining armaments—continually refusing to face the fundamental need for some effective organization of an international or supernational authority which could not be ignored by any one power.[1]

Once more, the exigencies of war made us fertile in promises to distressed and oppressed nationalities—as an example I single out the Armenians.[2] But these promises remain unfulfilled, and political or financial preoccupations seem to have precluded any real consideration of the claim of justice.

The fact is that our tradition of international policy was fashioned under the dominance of ideas of national independence and absolute

[1] I cannot but think the question of arbitration should be given priority over the question of disarmament. Once establish the principle of arbitration in all international disputes so firmly that no nation could ignore it, and it would cease to be worth while for any nation to maintain large armaments.

[2] With reference to this standing disgrace, I desire to get my fellow-countrymen who care for their national honour to read *The People of Araral*, by Joseph Burtt (Hogarth Press, 3s. 6d.)—an excellent summary of information.

sovereignty which have become antiquated and unworkable. We have arrived at the point of recognizing the necessity for a supernational organization, for the League of Nations is a deliberate attempt by conscious contract to create such an organization. But the League is a plant which requires much tending and nourishment. Especially it requires behind it a far acuter international intelligence and sympathy than has yet come into existence in any of the powerful countries. The horror of war is, indeed, deep over the whole of Western and Central Europe, a horror which is deepened by the sense of the awful and still unknown resources of science available for destruction. But the horror does not yet seem to have affected the national intelligence in any one of the great countries sufficiently deeply to bring with it a resolve to secure the maintenance of peace, and to make the sacrifices which such security demands. Nor is it certain how long the horror bred of the Great War will survive. We need a far stronger guarantee for the maintenance of peace than anything we have yet achieved.

(5) Finally, if we let our eyes wander further over the relation of races and colours, especially as those relations affect our British Empire, and our British responsibility, we behold a situation admittedly full of anxiety—in China, in India, and in Africa. We must recognize that everywhere the real question at issue is the same, whether in the relation of classes to one another

at home or of nations and of races in the wider world. It is this—Is there any remedy for the permanent causes of discontent and hostility other than the recognition by all privileged classes and races and nations that, whereas in the past the stronger have exploited the weaker, and the weaker have been forced to submit in silence, now there is a difference? However precarious the present prospects of democracy, however widespread the reaction to autocracy, this at least is true. The fundamental idea of democracy, the idea of the spiritual equality of all men—in such sense that all men and all races have a divine right to a fair opportunity to make the best of themselves for their own good first, as also, further, for the future good of the world—that fundamental idea has got hold of the conscience of almost all men of all colours and races; and it would seem as if we must either set ourselves in serious earnest to correspond with its demands or fall under the divine judgment which works in the slow process of history, and occasionally breaks out in catastrophes and cataclysms.

LECTURE VI

PRACTICAL MEASURES

In the last lecture, contemplating the period of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Industrial Revolution, we found ourselves in face of what was both a period of vast advance and expansion of human faculty, and also a period of failure and withdrawal: a vast material advance accompanied by a deep spiritual failure. Let me illustrate what I mean by two quotations—the first from Seeley's *Expansion of England*.[1]

"Taken together," he says, "the whole successful development which culminated at Utrecht (i.e. the Treaties of Utrecht in 1713) secularized and materialized the English people as nothing had ever done before. Never were sordid motives so supreme, never was religion and every high influence so much discredited, as in the thirty years that followed." The second is from George Unwin: "The subordination, in theory and in aspiration, of the material to the spiritual is what lends a perennial charm to mediæval history. . . . In the pages of the textbooks dealing with the period after the Reformation the situation is quite reversed. The material world expands. The spiritual world dwindles. The village economy and the town economy give place to a national

[1] P. 137.

economy, and then to a world economy. But the social and spiritual environment, which had been co-extensive with Christendom, is displaced by a narrow national spirit and policy, which disowns the unity of civilization." The failure was thus both in depth and width. It was the substitution of the economic man and his material interests for the complete man with his spiritual interests; and of Britain or the British Empire for humanity. And it was the spirit of the eighteenth century, of which Seeley and Unwin, from widely different points of view, are both speaking, which fashioned the capitalist and nationalist organization of society under which we are still living, but which is now so deeply threatened that it may be regarded as coming to an end. The forces which appear to be undermining it and the criticisms to which it is exposed are manifold, and I endeavoured to summarize them in the last lecture. The total effect of these criticisms is a demand for the reconstruction of our industry and of our international and interracial relationships which is really revolutionary, but revolutionary only in the sense in which the word has been applied to "the Industrial Revolution," as meaning a profound change in the basis and tendency of society, but not one accomplished by violence or accomplished suddenly.

At this point, then, we pass from the causes of discontent to the prospect of remedies.

The second proposition which I advanced at starting was *that the evils which we deplore in*

our present society are not the inevitable results of any unalterable laws of nature or any kind of inexorable necessity, but are the fruits of human blindness (largely voluntary blindness), wilfulness, avarice and selfishness on the widest scale and in the long course of history: and their alteration demands something more than legislative and external changes—necessary as these must be; it demands a fundamental change in the spirit in which we think about and live our common life, and conduct our industry, and maintain our international and inter-racial dealings. The challenge must be "Repent ye—change your minds"—if the kingdom of Heaven is to come in any other form than as a judgment of God, whether that judgment would be sudden and scathing or gradually disintegrating.

Here I am assuming that human freedom, however restricted, is a reality—that mankind and individual men are in a real, though restricted, measure masters of their own destiny. Science to-day is certainly much less disposed than formerly to deny the doctrine of moral freedom and responsibility, which, on the other hand, is the verdict of common sense, and affords the only rational ground for any appeal to human wills—a doctrine, moreover, which lies at the root of the Christian religion. And if man has any measure of self-determination, that involves a "freedom" to do wrong as well as to do right—to thwart God as much as to co-operate with Him. Thus the assumption of all the prophets, modern

as well as ancient, is that human sin has, in fact, on the largest scale been thwarting the divine purpose and turning blessings into curses. Society as it now exists, it may be taken for granted, is a parody of the divine intention. But there is no limit assignable to the change which might be wrought in our whole social outlook by a change of spirit—a fresh realization of what is to be sought as most important, and what is to be avoided as most disastrous, in the conduct of human life.

It is, of course, idle to depreciate the necessity for change in the fabric of our laws, the machinery of our government, and the methods of our industry. Dr. Johnson's famous lines:—

> How small of all that human hearts endure
> That part which laws or kings can make or cure

used, I remember, to excite, and justly to excite, the indignant remonstrance of Benjamin Jowett—it was unintelligible, he said, how a sane and observant man could utter such nonsense. It is, of course, true "that you cannot make men moral by Act of Parliament"; yet the laws and institutions of a country do make it, to a degree which it is difficult to exaggerate, either easier or harder for men to walk in the right way: and conversely it is manifestly true that no deep change of spirit can come about in human society without expressing itself in such changed legislation and such fresh or reformed institutions as can make it

effective. But, on the other hand, Leon Trotsky's anticipation, that the change of conditions and institutions, which it is the goal of the communistic revolution to bring into effect, will suffice to secure that change of spirit in human nature which such new conditions and institutions require for their working, is as far as possible from being warranted. "All the emotions which we revolutionists at the present time feel apprehensive of naming—so much have they been worn thin by hypocrites and vulgarians—such as disinterested friendship, love for one's neighbours, sympathy—will be the mighty ringing words of socialist poetry. . . . All will be equally interested in the success of the whole. The struggle will have a purely ideologic character. It will have no running after profits; it will have nothing mean, no betrayals, no bribery, none of the things which form the soul of competition in a society divided into classes."[1] This sort of Utopia-building —this anticipation of an elimination of human selfishness by a change of conditions—is entirely without warrant from above, is our deepest experience. Walt Whitman, in his essay referred to above, is in this respect far more reasonable and enlightening than Trotsky. Perhaps there is no need to argue the point. Certainly in these lectures I cannot hope to enter fully into the question of human freedom, nor into the necessity, if any well-ordered social structure is to be established or maintained, of a change of spirit and a training

[1] *Literature and Revolution*, pp. 230 ff.

in character depending on quite different motives from those which merely changed institutions can supply. The primary essential, now and always, is a fundamental reversal of the inner spirit of selfish individualism—the individualism also of class and nation and race—which for so long a period has been allowed to dominate our life.

At this point I take up my third initial proposition. *That we should not look for such change of spirit to arise from any simultaneous conversion of men in masses. If we accept the teaching of past experience, we should expect the general alteration to arise from the influence in our society of groups of men, inspired probably by prophetic leaders, who have attained to a true vision both of the source of our evils and of the nature of the true remedies; and who have the courage of faith to bind them together to act and to suffer in the cause of human emancipation until their vision and their faith come to prevail more or less completely in society at large.* I supported this contention with examples of its truth; but since I began the task of these lectures the publication of George Unwin's too fragmentary remains [1] has strongly corroborated the proposition. He has impressively combated the common assumption of our historians that the dominant influences in human history are wars and politics. He affirms that it is "the inward possessions and experiences of mankind—religion, art, literature, science, music,

[1] *Studies in Economic History* (Macmillan) 1927, p. 14.

philosophy, but, above all, the ever-widening and deepening communion of human minds and souls with each other. These things, in my opinion, embody not only the main outcome of history, but also its main creative factors." Yes: its main creative factors. The factor of economic pressure in human history cannot be ignored, nor the political factor, nor the mainly disastrous and retrograde influence of wars: but none of these can compare in power with the less tangible influences of spirit—the mysterious changes which occur in human thought and feeling and aspiration, and bind men together; which make possible what was previously impossible, and antiquate and paralyse what was previously dominant and effective. And such deep changes in human thought and feeling are almost always associated with the name of some dominant individual—a Luther, a Rousseau, a Wilberforce, a Ruskin—or else have their origin in some small group of thinkers, and spread from that centre till they become a public opinion which cannot be resisted. Of course, I am speaking to-day at a late stage of the movement of reaction against the influences, economic and political, which we inherit from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The movement is democratic in that it believes in an equality of spiritual worth in every individual: it is liberal or emancipatory in that it seeks to give to every one born into our society a real freedom to make the best of himself, and would beat down all forms of enslaving

exploitation of the weaker by the stronger: it is in the general sense socialistic in that it seeks to make the common interests, or the general will, dominant over the excesses of individualism: it is universalist in that it combats the narrowness and militarism of a false patriotism, and thinks in terms of humanity rather than of the nation. It is already, I say, an old movement: but it has by no means seen any adequate fruit of its efforts. We must all recognize the powerful forces which are organized against it, and the divisions among its advocates which weaken the cause of social and international reconstruction. But in these lectures I am mainly concerned with only one powerful influence in the movements of human emancipation—the influence of Jesus of Nazareth, which received embodiment in the Christian Church. Thus I come to my fourth proposition—that in the deepest and fullest sense *Jesus Christ is the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, in its social as well as its individual life, and in the present world as well as in that which is to come: and that there lies upon those who believe in Him a responsibility which cannot be exaggerated to be true to the principles which He taught, and by all available means to bring them to bear upon any society of which they form a part, especially when it professes the Christian name.*

Of the teaching of Jesus Christ as it was and is, especially as it bears on the relation of man to man, I have tried in an earlier lecture to give a

careful analysis.[1] When we examine its implications, we find how accurately and deeply they correspond with the ideal of modern democracy, not as we often see it but at its best. The ideal of Walt Whitman, however little realized at present in any so-called democratic country, would be found to correspond closely with the summary given above of the teaching of Him whom we call our Lord, or with the account of it given in *Ecce Homo*.

Following on the analysis of the teaching of Jesus, there was given above an outline sketch of its splendid fruitfulness in earlier periods of the life of the Church Catholic. But, though from the history of the Early Church and from that of the Middle Ages we can derive powerful inspirations and powerful warnings, yet we cannot hope to find there precedents which can be acted upon to-day, simply because the circumstances and conditions of earlier ages cannot be reproduced. Let me point out more definitely what I mean. Nothing is more inspiring, at least to my mind, than the history of "the brotherhood" in the early centuries. There you see a living example of the application of Christ's principles to social practice. But the Church of the early days was a much suspected and persecuted body, whose membership was kept pure by the danger of joining it. "Those within" and "those without" were sharply and manifestly divided. And among "those within," the

[1] See above, Lecture II.

general will could bring to bear a healthy moral discipline upon offenders. But such a state of things is by no means ours. The long consequences of Church establishment, accompanied for centuries by the remorseless persecution of hostile opinion, accompanied still by the disastrous practice of indiscriminate infant baptism, place us in a situation where the distinction of "those without" and "those within" has been almost obliterated, and anything like the public discipline of primitive Christianity is not reproducible.

Let me endeavour to sketch the present situation. There is no doubt at the present time a great change in the atmosphere of society. It is not that there is less real Christianity among us or fewer real Christians than in former days: perhaps the contrary is the truth. It is that the fabric of conventional Christianity is tottering. A great part of the philosophic, scientific and artistic worlds would hardly claim or wish to be called Christian: and the revolt is not, as it was a generation back, a merely doctrinal revolt which still gives loyal adherence to the Christian moral standard. To-day there is a widespread revolt against Christian morality, as is exemplified in modern novel literature, in the *propaganda* of the movement called euphemistically *Birth Control*, and in an important section of the feminist movement: while the psychological movement which has "self-expression" for its watchword often appears to be the

old philosophy of selfishness under a new name. Once more, though the old political economy which is called "orthodox" has been displaced and its "economic man" shown to be mainly a figment, yet the maxim "business is business" —which is meant to warn religious or charitable considerations off the field of industry—is not practically less dominant than formerly.

In part these movements of revolt against Christian standards have been provoked by the Church's own faults and unfaithfulnesses; but certainly they have now run quite beyond her control. The younger among us must prepare to find themselves in a world which in great part has revolted from Christianity—from real Christianity as well as from what is only conventional, and from its moral principles as well as its intellectual dogmas: a world in which the present relics of Church establishment will have passed away, and in which the distinction of "those within" from "those without" will again have become more obvious: a world perhaps in which the active profession of Christianity will again subject a man, if not to persecution, yet to much unpopularity and ridicule. This may be all for the best, and may give the Church a fresh opportunity of showing what Christianity really means. But at present we are in Western Europe a good way off such a condition of things. England, in particular, shows no signs of repudiating a Christianity, which is indeed vague and indefinite both morally and intellectually, but is not quite unreal. And in

any case the dreams which sometimes visit the imagination of good men—dreams of a fresh start in Christian living—a fresh organization of Christianity which could develop its own economics within its own community like the early Christians—is a vain dream, because the industrial life of the world is so strongly unified that any such Utopia is impossible. A man or woman may even be moved to join a Religious Community to escape the holding of private property and to experience the full joy of brotherhood or sisterhood: but they find, as Dr. Figgis sadly confessed, that from the economic and industrial world and its responsibilities they cannot escape, so long as they need clothes which they cannot make and food which they cannot produce for themselves, and must travel about from place to place by the public vehicles. We cannot reproduce early Christianity.

Still less can we reproduce the world of the Middle Ages, for all the enthusiasm which its ideals may generate in our mind. The mediæval sociology postulated a united Christendom, recognizing a common ecclesiastical authority presiding over the whole of human life: and when bit by bit, in this department of life and in that, such a common recognition of authority was no longer to be found, the mediæval system ceased to work. To-day it is hardly more applicable to the general social life of Catholic than of Protestant countries. Nor ought those whom the mediæval theory fascinates to allow themselves to forget

that even in the height of its power the splendour of its claim is half eclipsed by its terrible failure in practical achievement. To the student of mediæval history in detail it cannot but seem as if the higher the theory soars, the lower the practice sinks.

But if we cannot repeat the noble experiments of the Early or of the Mediæval Church, because the circumstances under which we live are so different from theirs, even less can we acquiesce in the base abdication, and abandonment of responsibility for social practice, of which the divided Church of the post-Reformation period was guilty in all its chief portions. As we have seen, it never gave up the corporal works of mercy. Its ministers went on visiting the sick and in some scanty measure feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. But this sort of ambulance work cannot compensate for the abandonment of aggressive warfare, like that of the prophets of old, against the abiding sources of misery and strongholds of tyranny.

Once more, then, we have to gird ourselves to the task of letting the world understand what the Church of Christ really stands for—what its real mind is about the foundations of society, about the relation of man to man and class to class and nation to nation. But I must not speak as if what I am urging were anything new to-day. The cause which I plead is a cause which has been vocal in the religious world since the days, at least, of Frederick Maurice and of Shaftesbury.

If we strive to do our difficult duty to-day, let us not forget that we are entering into the labours of other men of whom the succession has not failed.

As to what we ought to be up and doing to-day if we are to fulfil our Christian vocation I will endeavour in the short time that remains to me to speak very definitely.

(1) We need a strong combined effort to make men understand afresh that Christianity is a life before it is a doctrine and that life a fellowship. "The way" was not and cannot be just an individual discipline. It is a brotherhood. The New Covenant, like the Old, is with the community first, and with the individual only as a member of the community.

There is the most pressing necessity for a fresh effort to make this fundamental fact understood.

Of course, we must not allow ourselves to be *mis*understood. The life draws its motives from a certain doctrine about God and about man; and it would lose its vitality if it lost its hold on its creed. It is a life too centring on private prayer and corporate worship, and no abundance of social activity could make up for failure in devotion. Once more it is a personal way of life: and its stronghold is in personal character. How many careers of public usefulness are blighted and extinguished by failures of private character! We need too often John Henry Newman's warning :—

Thou to wax fierce in the cause of the Lord,
To threaten and pierce with the heavenly sword!
Anger and zeal and the joy of the brave
Who bade thee to feel,
Sin's slave?

No doubt in all these ways we must guard against misunderstanding. None the less Christianity is first of all a way of life for men in fellowship. The call of Christ was to live this life. The first name for the Church was "the way." Our endless critical, theological, and ecclesiastical or sacramental controversies are always making mankind forget—nay, leading the controversialists themselves to forget—that the object of the Church of Christ, as its Founder defined it, is to live a life, and that life an organized brotherhood; and that the only way anticipated by Him to win the world is to preach the good tidings of the kingdom, and let men see the sincerity of our proclamation of brotherhood by our works.

(2) Our task to-day is therefore partly one of proclamation or preaching—what I may call re-tuning the pulpits of our English Christendom. For this purpose I think our greatest intellectual or literary need is a comprehensive work on Christian Ethics. It must lay its basis in a just historical estimate of what the ethical teaching of Jesus really meant and of its development in the New Testament and in the history of the Church: it must justify itself philosophically, scientifically, psychologically: finally it must give an elaborated account of human life, as it should be according

to the standard of Christ, in all its various modes, directions and activities, individual and corporate. This, for one man, would be the work of a life-time, and the one man would need departmental coadjutors. There is grievous need that some such exhaustive work, comparable in scope, depth and completeness to that of the great mediævals, should be done for our time. The synthetic and positive part of such a work would need to be supplemented by a new casuistry, which on a comprehensive scale would seek to deal again with the perplexing problems which arise in the practical application of moral principles, such as in particular cases seem so often to conflict. But I am persuaded that all such casuistical work will fail of usefulness until the positive structure of Christian Ethics is rebuilt. As things stand to-day, the passionate and often very able attacks on the Christian Ethics—for instance from the side of Nietzsche or from the side of the advocates of Birth Prevention—gain their advantage from the grave uncertainty which possesses our minds as to what the real standard of life is which can be legitimately called Christian. It must be recognized that anything like a restatement of Christian Ethics would call for an active crusade on matters of private morality—such as the sexual relations—quite as urgently as on matters of social or industrial conduct. But at present I am concerned primarily with Christian Social Ethics. I am more or less isolating this field of thought and action

—not because it can really be isolated, so as to be pursued alone; but because no one of us can live his life, without, for practical purposes, more or less departmentalizing it, even though the unity of motive through all the departments has to be constantly and vigilantly maintained.

It is indeed quite right that we should engage in different associations, each of which is concerned with some one of the different departments into which the full life of the individual must perforce be organized. Again let me quote George Unwin: "The social life of the modern man is made up of a great number of constantly changing relationships, most of which are freely chosen by himself. He joins a church, a golf club, a political party; he adopts a . . . profession, subscribes to a score of philanthropic societies" and so on. . . . "Now this liberty (of association), when once achieved, seems the most natural thing in the world. 'Natural liberty' is the term which Adam Smith applied to it, and it is natural in one most important sense of the word. It is not, indeed, the condition in which man is born, but it is the condition for which he is born, the natural end of man, not his natural beginning. This natural liberty, this separation of the sphere of politics, religion, science and industry so that each may be pursued on conditions proper to itself is not only the main basis of future progress, it is the main result of long ages of progress in the past." [1]

[1] *Studies in Econ. Hist.*, p. 21.

So far George Unwin. This natural liberty of free association within the unity of the State, this liberty of departmentalizing human life, we see gravely threatened by present-day despotisms, monarchical or communistic. It is, in fact, the fear of State control stifling the free action of the human spirit which causes the old conception of State socialism to be to-day more and more widely forsaken. We must jealously claim and maintain the liberty of association in the different departments of life, and, although the Christian religion peremptorily requires of us that all our efforts should be brought under the one Christian motive, yet we must—in spite of our ecclesiastical allegiances—insist upon the liberty of association for the special motive of bringing the principles of Christ to bear on social and industrial conditions.

What I am advocating, then, is a special association, intellectual and practical, for Christian social propaganda. Of course such associations have existed and do exist, but they seem to me to be in danger of coming to something like a standstill. They need to make a fresh start on a freshly laid intellectual basis and with a new plan of campaign. The intellectual basis in an adequate form, as I have just said, needs to be provided. Meanwhile a great deal of thought has been given to the matter. There is at least one great book on the *Social Doctrines of the Christian Churches*—that of Troeltsch Prophets, like F. D. Maurice and Brooke Foss Westcott and

Henry Scott Holland, have prophesied. Committees have laboured. Reports have been issued. I need instance only the labours and products of Copec and the Stockholm Conference: and I can point to Fr. Paul Bull's *Economics of the Kingdom of God* for a collection of statements of principle.

(3) What I suggest then is that, using the abundant materials we have got, while praying for the supply of something greater and completer than we have at least in England, we should seek to reorganize the forces of what perhaps can be called by no better name than Copec, which means the Christian Order in Politics, Economics and Citizenship—not forgetting the Law of the Land. It must take into its purview all that concerns our social life at home in town and country—everything that concerns the making adequate external provision for the propagation and development of human life—only in the sense that, while it is the business of the State or of various elements in the State to make the provision, it is the business of the Christian community (so far as it has influence) to see to it that the provision is adequately made, so that every individual born into citizenship shall have a reasonable opportunity to make the best of himself. It will also have within its purview the relation of nations, and seek to bring all the forces of our Christianity to bear in favour of substituting arbitration for war: not least it will consider the problem of colour, and organize

the forces of those who believe that God is no respecter of persons to make as nearly impossible as may be the exploitation of the weaker races and to further their welfare. There are associations, not specifically Christian, which are doing these things. We should be in the field not as rivals or as critics, but simply because we believe that the Christian Church exists to bear a specific humanitarian witness, which it has lamentably failed to bear in the past, and that now and for the future we feel bound to see that its special contribution is effectively made.

(4) It will be fairly obvious that this organization of forces must be inter-denominational. We are in our generation keenly alive, as our fathers were not, to the evils of schism. In a real sense all portions of a divided Christendom are schismatic: for no one is anything like a full expression of the Spirit of Christ: each stands for some element in the whole truth which is injured by separation from other elements: it is only a reunited Church which can be really or fully catholic. But though some of the existing communions might (it would seem) easily be reunited, so closely akin are their principles both of faith and organization and worship, and indeed some appear to be on the high road to reunion, yet reunion on a large scale seems a long way off, and in Britain even conferences with a view to reunion seem to have arrived at a dead-lock, at least for a time. Lausanne was very valuable: but rather for its fraternal spirit and the oppor-

tunity it afforded for frank recognition of the causes of separation, than because it showed the way to a removal of the doctrinal and sacramental differences. But Copec and Stockholm have made plain that there is a territory—a large and most important territory—on which (without any discussion of unsolved difficulties or any kind of compromise of principle) we can think and act together as Christians—as if we were already one Church and could face the world as a united body—I mean, of course, the great territory of the industrial and social relations of mankind, to which there is such urgent necessity that the principles of Christ should be reapplied.

(5) What we want, then, at home is an organization of the Christian forces of our country—Anglicans, Free Churchmen, Friends and (if they will consent to join with us on this field) Roman Catholics—to reassert the social meaning of Christianity, as I have been endeavouring to expound it. But there are three qualifications which it is necessary to observe. The first, that the association must not claim to be official. What we want is an association of Christians to give effect to a certain point of view—one which is very far from being able to claim to be conservative of the recent traditions of our industry and our society. We cannot in faithfulness to our Lord's principle of brotherhood demand less. But in all our different communions—certainly in that to which I belong—there is a very strong body which has a vehement feeling

of repugnance and alarm towards anything which moves in the direction of socialism. Without claiming anything like perfection for things as they are, they yet claim that the capitalist organization shall be maintained. Any official representation of the Churches must therefore almost inevitably be paralysed. We must have a humbler aim. In all the Churches there is a very large number of members—I will not attempt to say whether a majority or a minority—which are in harmony with the spirit of Copec. It is this army of individuals which we must strive to get effectively together—to think and act as one body—to present to the world an organized body of Christian opinion which, while retaining its old denominational loyalties, can unite to present afresh such an idea of the function of the Church in society as had been forgotten for some centuries.

(6) Again, our association would be obviously in one sense political. It would represent such an interpretation of the mind of Christ as demands deep changes in the present industrial and social structure of society, as demands a much fuller justice to the weaker and exploited races than has yet been meted out to them, and in the relation of nations demands the substitution by all means of arbitration for war. Such changes can only be brought about by political action, by the establishment of new institutions and the reforming of old ones, by laws abrogated and laws enacted: and for such changes in our laws

and in our institutions we shall vigorously press, and be found supporting the parliamentary party which is prepared to effect them. But in two senses I hope we shall not be political. We shall not tie ourselves to any party in such sense as to impair our freedom to act against it, where loyalty to Christ seems to require it. Nor, again, shall we be political in such sense as to suppose, or allow it to be supposed of us, that mere political changes can of themselves bring us nearer to the kingdom of God. Institutions and laws can immensely help the formation of the right spirit in man, and at least as obviously can hinder. Our object must be to make our laws and institutions such as shall express and help the spirit of brotherhood, and make it worth while for every man to make the best of himself and do his best work—that is the spirit of democracy at its best. But democracies it is evident can make themselves as great a hindrance to real brotherhood and real spiritual liberty as aristocracies and monarchies. And we will never let it be forgotten that the thing we are aiming at is not any mere change of laws or any mere change in the distribution of wealth, or the equalization of material advantages—not any or all of these things as ends, but only so far as they are means towards the expression of the spirit of the kingdom of God.

(7) All that I have been asking for so far is the co-ordination and reorganization of associations and agencies which already exist. But this

co-ordination is a very important matter. At present we are in great danger of becoming a number of groups working more or less apart under different names and in more or less of rivalry; and by our separation failing to make that impression, which I believe even at present we ought to be able to make, upon the imagination of the country. In part this separation is, I suppose, inevitable. For example, a pacifist movement which demands the recognition that under no circumstances is war justifiable, and under no conceivable circumstances will the citizen consent to it or enlist in it, cannot command the allegiance of a great many of those who can act together under what I have called the Copec banner. The same is true of those who claim in the name of Christ to wave the red flag of Communism. The co-ordination then will not be complete. But it could fairly easily become general, if there were such a representative central body—representative of all sorts of Christians, but not official—as could make an effective appeal to all the diverse groups. But there is one other requisite which is unfulfilled—the attempt to fulfil which has been hitherto unsuccessful, but which is really a requisite—that is, that the organization of men and women who are of the same mind should not be merely central. The evil of all our national organizations for any purpose is that, centring almost inevitably in London, they come to be managed and controlled in London, with the result that the greater voices of the North

and East and Midland never have due effect. The strength of our movement ought to be in local associations. Nothing except local and civic associations, embracing Christians of all denominations, and really active and courageous, will ever bring home to the country what the Christian name ought to stand for. The attempt of the Christian Social Crusade to establish such local association was not very successful. Its comparative failure was partly due to poverty. In part it was that local religious leaders were sometimes found reluctant. But I am persuaded our initial effectiveness would not depend on great numbers at starting, or on the presence of all, or any of, the official leaders of the denominations. There must be thirty or forty or a hundred in every town, who are both believers in the Name of Jesus as the true redeemer of man, and are also sure that this redemption requires for its free course social and industrial reform and reconstruction of a radical kind. Let them get themselves organized and active, so that they can become known and recognized locally, and even, if necessary, feared in municipal life. Where such associations, dissociated from any specifically Christian motive, exist already, let them not become rivals but associates and co-operators. Then also let them be affiliated to the central organization.

That, then, is what I am asking for: a strengthening of our intellectual basis: a reorganization of our Christian social forces on an interdenominational basis without attachment to any

political party: not claiming to be officially representative of any denomination, but only of a state of mind and determination of action which exists equally in all denominations with a strong central council, but finding more than half its strength in local organizations of Christian opinion in all our towns and (it might be) in country districts also. Speaking in the presence of representatives of the important trust, under whose auspices these lectures have been delivered, I dare to ask them to consider whether the project which I have outlined could have their co-operation. But while we are giving special attention to our own country, we must not lose sight of the fact that the cause is catholic—humanitarian and not British, and my hope is that the British section of the International Movement, which we associate with the name of Stockholm, may serve as the centre around which our efforts—intellectual, educational, and practical—and our organizations, national and local, may be grouped in effective unity.

I have sought in these six lectures to traverse a vast subject and not to fail to reach in some measure a practical conclusion. Let my last word be a summons, in the name of the first Christians whose memory we recall, in the name of the spiritual and intellectual giants of the Middle Ages, in the name of Hugh Latimer the English Reformer, in the name of all those who in these latter days have reinterpreted to us the

meaning of the Gospel of the kingdom of God, in the name of all who to-day are distressed and exploited and fail to reach their goal through the pressure of unjust conditions in society or industry, which are not really unalterable, or irremediable, in the Name most of all of Him whose redemptive love is still over us and within us, and whose indignation blazes for ever against all that crushes the weak and injures the little ones—a summons to all believers to arm themselves with the sword of the Divine Warrior to fight for the cause of the kingdom of God.

APPENDICES

APPENDED NOTE A

A SCHEME OF INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION PROPOSED FROM NEW ZEALAND

In 1927 Mr. Harry Valder—a timber merchant from Hamilton —and Mr. Frank Harty—a clergyman—came to England to advocate a scheme of industrial reconstruction which had procured authorization from the New Zealand Parliament in *The Companies Empowering Act*, 1924, and which is now represented by *The Employée Partnership Institute* (*N.Z.*) *Ltd.*, *Auckland*, and which can be heard of in London at the N.Z. Offices, 415, Strand. The Act was passed—after much opposition from both Conservative Business and from Militant Socialism—for a purpose thus described in the recital:

> "Whereas it is advisable to give encouragement and facilities to those employers who may wish to evolve some workable plan whereby the employees in industry may become interested in its efficient and profitable operation, and whereas the existing company legislation contemplates that the profits and management of a company will belong wholly to those who subscribe to its capital, and whereas it is expedient so to amend such legislation that by agreement between employers and employees provision may be made for the issue of shares in a Company to those who give only personal service to it whereby their participation in the profits and management may be conveniently arranged."

This "recital" sufficiently explains the principle of the scheme which the Act made it possible to put into force. It is to make the workers of every class, by hand or brain, partners in the industry concerned in a true sense, with the rights of partners, in virtue

of the possession of Labour Shares; which would have "no nominal or capital value," but which would (directly or by representation) carry otherwise the same powers as the Capital Shares. This principle is safeguarded in various ways which need not here be described. The other leading principle of the scheme is that while Capital Shares carry with them only the right to a fixed return (regulated in view of the varying risks of different industrial enterprises), the profits go only to the bearers of Labour Shares (which are allotted to all the workers from the highest to the lowest, the lowest receiving only one and the highest a much larger number) in proportion to the number of Labour Shares which each holds, of course in addition to minimum wages or salaries. Thus after all the expenses of the industry are paid—including the payment of salaries or wages, and the payment of the return for capital—and after all necessary reserves are made for the future necessities of the industry—the residue is to be divided among the workers, who besides take their share by adequate representation in the management of the business. Those who wish for further enlightenment about this scheme can receive it by application to the London Offices mentioned above. The scheme appears to be working well in New Zealand, and it seems to deserve more consideration than it has hitherto obtained in England.

APPENDED NOTE B[1]

THE EDUCATION OF THE ADOLESCENT

We, the undersigned, members of the "Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions," desire to bring all the influence we can to bear upon the Christian opinion of our Country, so as to persuade it to give a vigorous backing to the "Report of the Consultative Committee on the Education of the Adolescent," and to press the Government at once to take measures for carrying its recommendations into effect. As a body of Christian ministers of different denominations, associated to act together in social questions, we are convinced that among such questions none is more important than Education. There can be few Christian ministers who have not seen cause to deplore both the lamentable waste of educational effort which occurs under our present system—because, for the vast majority of the population, it breaks off too soon, viz. at 14 years old at latest—and also, what is still more lamentable, the moral and intellectual deterioration which takes place in many of our young people between the ages of 14 and 18.

Therefore, we hail with enthusiasm the main proposals of the Commission, viz. (1) that primary education should end for all children at 11-12, and be followed by a post-primary or secondary course, obligatory on all, and (2) that this post-primary course should last not less than four years, which means that the leaving age in all cases should be raised from 14 to 15.

The close inter-connection of these proposals must be insisted upon. The value of the additional year depends upon a reconstruction of the educational system for the latter years of school life.

The composition of the Commission, and the character of the Report, give great weight to its conclusions and recommenda-

[1] See p. 141.

tions; and we observe that it has received the support of all the Teachers' organizations and of the Association of Education Committees. It bears a striking resemblance to the Report of an independent Committee issued, under the title of *The Next Step in Education*, by a small group of notable people under the presidency of Viscount Haldane. Also, it is the conclusion of a long series of official inquiries, from the Majority Report of the Poor Law Commission in 1909 down to the Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction on Juvenile Employment in 1918, urging the grave injury to the character, physical health and intelligence of large numbers of young persons caused by their premature entry into industry.

We do not here enter upon the difficulties involved in giving effect to these proposals throughout the country: that is to say, we do not enter upon the question of expense to the nation, except so far as to say that we believe there is no direction in which the country can less afford to exercise economy than in the direction of education, when an extension of effort is proved to be necessary; nor do we attempt to decide exactly how soon the necessary provision of schools and teachers could be made—that is, whether the interval requisite for the necessary preparation should be five or six or seven years. But we desire to call attention to two considerations:—

(1) That the advantage of the change would be not only that the children would have one year more of whole-time schooling, but that their whole school life would be divided into two periods, and that four years would be given to the post-primary period. We venture to assert that the result of this would be to raise the level of intellectual interest with which boys and girls would go out into the world, and immensely develop the opportunities of part-time continuation schools and the machinery of adult education generally.

(2) That the condition of the Labour Market gives additional emphasis to the recommendations of the Commission. For the last three years more than one million adults, on an average, have been unemployed. During that

period, over one million five hundred children have entered industry—at the rate of not less than five hundred thousand a year. The extreme example is the coal industry, in which there is acute unemployment. When an industry cannot find employment for its adult workers, it is wise to check the inflow of the rising generation, in the interests not only of the children, but also of those adults, whose wages they reduce by their competition, and of the community as a whole.

In dealing with the specific question of Juvenile Unemployment, we desire also to call attention to the "Report of the Committee on Education and Industry (England and Wales)" (Part 1). Amongst its recommendation is a permanent scheme for Juvenile Unemployment Centres, suggesting that a nucleus of such centres should be established in certain of the big cities, and that investigation should be made into the possibility of forming special classes for unemployed juveniles, if possible in the day-time, in those areas where no Juvenile Employment Centre exists.

Still more emphatic on this point is the Blanesburgh Report, which states, under the heading of "Benefit for Juveniles":—

> "It is at this age (14 to 18 years) that industrial workers are made or marred, and we are convinced of the necessity of providing them when out of work with suitable industrial instruction and training. This is the reason for our recommendation that no payments shall be made to juveniles at all unless they attend a suitable course of instruction, wherever such a course is available. . . . We attach the greatest possible importance to this provision of facilities for training. We are aware that efforts have been, and are being, made by the Ministry in this direction. In our judgment, further provision is essential. . . ."

It is mainly on these grounds that we desire that the Church of Christ should exercise all its influence in urging the Govern-

ment to proceed without delay in carrying the recommendations of the Commission into effect.

SIGNED on behalf of the "Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions" by leading members of the Church of England and the Free Churches. The address of the Council is 4, The Sanctuary, Westminster.

March 1, 1928.

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